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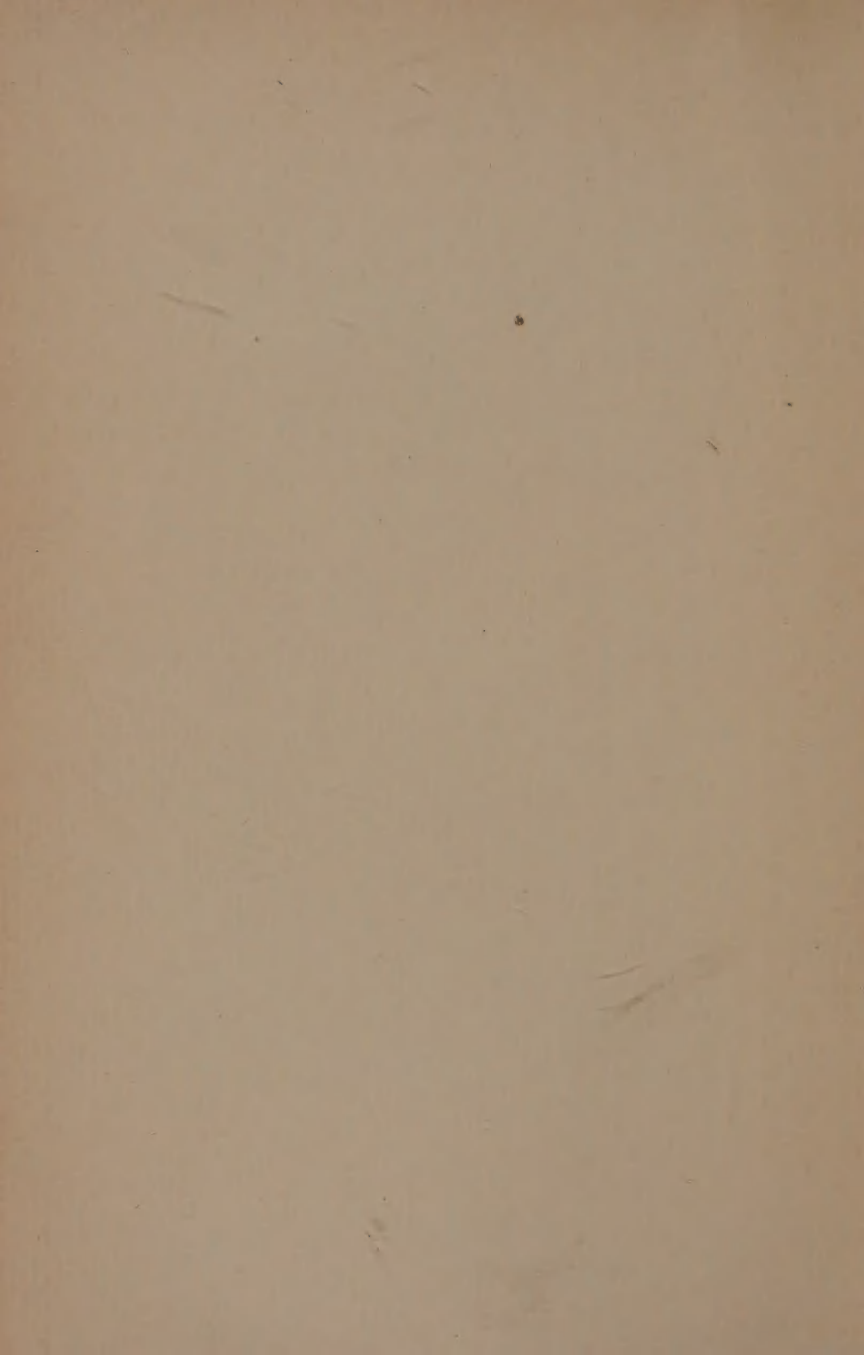
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THE GOSPEL  
OF  
SPIRITUAL INSIGHT

BEING

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

BY

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## PREFACE.

IT is not spiritually healthful to keep one's mind perpetually exercised in one field of thought. In the preparation of the "Gospel of Common Sense" my mind had been employed on the practical ethics of Christianity. I felt that it would be good for myself, as well as for my readers, to vary the study. Spiritual insight is helped by practical morality, and practical morality is aided by the cultivation of spiritual insight. So, upon laying down the Epistle of James, I took up the Gospel of John.

Nothing that has ever been written about Jesus the Christ shows such intimacy with His character, with His head, His heart, His mode of thought and feeling, as the fourth Gospel. No man has ever had such preparation for the work of setting forth the humanity and the divinity of Jesus, as John the son of Zebedee. The two men were akin, the children of two cousins who were very holy and devout women. Both his heredity and environment gave to John special ability to perceive the intellectual and spiritual characteristics of Jesus. There was one other thing in him: he was a man of prodigious heart, and his great heart was also most tender. His passions could rage like a storm, and sometimes became so vehement that his cousin Jesus called him "a son of thunder"; but they were so delicate and sweet and strong that that same Cousin, when dying on the cross, committed His own mother to John's loving care.

It would seem profitable, therefore, to try to see the Christ with the eyes of John. It is for this purpose that the studies in this volume are written. More than a score of standpoints are taken, but each is a position from which the Beloved Master was seen by the beloved disciple.

It is assumed that those who read this book believe in the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospel of St. John, and have never been troubled by the agitation of that question, or, having examined it, have seen how utterly futile the attacks of all hostile criticism have been. It may be well, however, to make a statement or two for the benefit of younger readers.

Our Lord was crucified A.D. 30. The writer of this Gospel, St. John, died somewhere in the neighborhood of A.D. 100, having survived the crucifixion of Jesus about seventy years. This devoted disciple of Jesus had a devout disciple named Polycarp, who died a martyr about A.D. 155, having survived his master a half century. Now Polycarp had a learned disciple named Irenæus, who became Bishop of Lyons about a quarter of a century after Polycarp's death, about half a century after the death of St. John. See what a close connection we have here; and this is what Irenæus says about Polycarp:

"I distinctly remember the incidents of that time better than events of recent occurrence; for the lessons received in childhood, growing with the growth of the soul, become identified with it; so that I can describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and his manner of life, and his personal appearance, and the discourses which he held before the people, and how he would describe his intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate words. And whatsoever things he had heard from them about the Lord, and about His miracles, and about His teaching, Polycarp, as having received them from eye-witnesses of the life of the Word, would relate *altogether in accordance with the Scriptures*"; that is, the Evangelry, including the Gospel of St. John, his master, as will appear.

In the third book of his great work on "The Refutation and Overthrow of Knowledge Falsely so Called," according to the late Bishop Lightfoot's summary, in *Contemporary Review* for August, 1876, Irenæus relates briefly the circumstances under which the four Gospels were written. He points out that the writings of the Evangelists arose directly from the oral Gospel of the apostles. He shows that the traditional teaching of the apostles has been preserved by a direct succession of elders, which in the principal congregations can be traced man by man, and he asserts that this teaching accords entirely with the evangelical and apostolical writings. He maintains, on the other hand, that the doctrine of the heretics was of comparatively recent growth. He assumes throughout, not only that our four canonical Gospels alone were acknowledged among faithful Christians in his own time, but that this

had been so from the beginning. His antagonists, indeed, accepted these same Gospels, paying especial deference to the fourth Evangelist; accordingly he argues with them *on this basis*.

Let us suppose that the Gospel of St. John was in the hands of the Christians about A.D. 80. If written then it would have been fifty years after the close of the series of events which it narrates. That is possible. The writer of this volume has been preparing some historical sketches, describing, among other things, the appearance, acts, and words of his own great teacher, from whom he parted fifty years ago, and his memory is distinct as to the words and even the tones of that famous person. It is to be remembered that in the case of St. John his whole life's work, between the crucifixion of Jesus and the writing of the Gospel, was to repeat again and again the words of Jesus, and to talk them over from time to time with the mother of Jesus, who resided with John. If he gave this Gospel to the world say A.D. 80, Polycarp most probably had it, and Polycarp's disciple, Irenæus, had it; and from time to time both must have compared the words of the Gospel with the remembered words of John, and found them altogether in accord. Internal evidence and tradition united in assigning the authorship of this book to St. John; and no one suggested any doubt for centuries after it was written; and at the close of this century there is left but one objection, and this is based upon the inability of gross and sensuous minds to appreciate the spiritual beauty of the exquisite discourses in this Gospel.

Whatever may be a man's learning in one or more departments, if there be a region of thought and feeling wholly unexplored by him, the most admirable representations thereof will seem to him, as, for instance, the Gospel of St. John does to the learned and able M. Renan, "false, insipid, impossible," while admitting that, "considered in itself, the narrative of the material circumstances of the life of our Lord, as furnished by the fourth Evangelist, is superior in point of verisimilitude to the narrative of the other three Gospels."

On the theory that St. John was not inspired, we are obliged to place him at the head of all human writers, and his Gospel at the top of all human literature. He has done what has been attempted by every great genius. They have failed; he has succeeded.

Homer, Æschylus, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, and Bulwer have failed where John has succeeded, namely, in making the supernatural natural. This is certainly worth considering. It was probably this which led M. Renan to apply the epithet "impossible" to passages of St. John's Gospel. It was because he did not believe miracles possible that he characterized portions of the Gospel as "false." He knew that all those great geniuses whose names we have given above had failed in this department, and took it for granted that John must fail also; but that John has not failed the consciousness of the centuries attest. There is nothing in all that he presents to us of the supernatural which is at all shocking to men, or women, or children, who read this Evangelist. In it the crucified and risen Christ seems as natural a person as the living and preaching Jesus. If St. John did not give the real facts in the case under supernatural guidance, then he is superior, immeasurably superior, to all the greatest geniuses that have breathed the breath of human life. So in any case, in dealing with the Gospel of St. John we are studying the highest production of human literature.

Many years ago I wrote a book, the first name of which was "Jesus." The publishers who bought it, after an edition had been sold, changed its name to "The Light of the Nations," and large editions have been circulated. In making the studies for this volume a number of points had been treated in that book, and upon examination I discovered that I can now write no better on those subjects; so by the permission of the proprietors I have used sometimes whole paragraphs of that book in this volume. This has been mostly done in the latter part.

As the writer of this volume approached the study of each topic, not in a critical spirit, not in a controversial spirit, but tenderly and devoutly, that he might see as far as possible into the heart of God by seeing into the heart of Jesus, he ventures to express the hope that his readers will peruse these pages in the same spirit. If the reading prove as profitable to them as the writing has been to him, verily he will reap a great reward.

CHARLES F. DEEMS.



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I.

The Incarnation a Divine Necessity.

## JOHN I.

(1) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.* [The Word never was without God.] (2) *The same was in the beginning with God.* [God never was without the Word.] (3) *All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that hath been made.* [The Word is the uncreated Creator of all things.] (4) *In Him was life: and the life was the light of men.* [The Word is the only living existence that never received life, but has produced all things that live.] (14) *And the Word became [not "was made"] flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth: and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father.* (18) *No one hath ever seen God.* The only-begotten Son, being in the bosom of the Father, He only hath declared [God]. [In Him only is the inside of God turned outward to the world.]



# THE Gospel of Spiritual Insight.

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## THE INCARNATION A DIVINE NECESSITY.

### THE FUNDAMENTAL THOUGHT.

THE fundamental thought of all religion and morality is the existence of a personal God. It is certain that there can be neither philosophical nor practical morality without religion. It is of the essence of what is ethical that it be binding. To be binding it must be set forth by something which has authority. No *thing* which is not a person can be thought of as having any authority. Religion is a binding sense of responsibility to that person who has the supreme right to say what shall be and what shall not be; and who has the omniscience to know when His laws are obeyed and when they are violated; and who has the power to punish and reward and who will never fail to inflict penalty in every case of violation and give reward in every case of obedience; and who shall have the wisdom, justice, goodness, and power to adjust both the punishment and the reward exactly according to the deserts of each moral agent.

Is it not perfectly manifest that all this is required to produce any thing that approaches practical morality?

And is it not quite as plain that the conception of such a Being is equivalent to the conception of a Personal God ?

If it be not immediately apparent that this is indispensable for any ethics that can be of use in making what men regard as a good life, sit down quietly and try to frame a system which shall not make any account whatever of a Personal God, and yet shall furnish the data and sanctions of morality.

#### “RIGHT” AND “WRONG.”

First of all, is there really any such a thing as “right” or “wrong”? If one be, there must be the other. If either, what do you mean by it? By the word “wrong,” for instance? Can you conceive of any thing wrong without reference to some rule? Of course you can not. What, then, do you mean by “rule”? Is it not some fixed instrument of measure? You wish to cut off exactly a yard from a piece of cloth; you fetch one end of the cloth to one end of the yardstick and draw the cloth along to the other end of the stick; then you cut off your cloth and are sure that you have a yard, and if any one doubts he is asked to try it by the measure. There is no room for any argument whatever. All the lawyers in a city might divide themselves into two ranks and bring their practiced powers for a whole day to the discussion of the question whether or not this were a yard of cloth. No process of reasoning could settle that question without practical measurement. *Two things that are each exactly equal to a third thing are exactly equal to each other:* that is an axiom, a statement quite self-evident. But what have you done in the case

of your cloth? You have simply ascertained that two things—the piece of cloth and the yardstick—are equal to each other, but you have *not* ascertained that either is equal to the third thing. It is that *third thing*, that *middle term*, which is still wanting. How do you know that your yardstick is correct? Your yardstick may be a little shorter or a little longer than the standard. You must be sure that that particular yardstick is exactly of the length of some standard measure fixed by authority. You can not assure yourself that you have a yard of cloth until you feel quite sure that the yardstick is precisely equal to a certain measure of thirty-six inches which has been fixed by law and set forth by authority. If there be no such authority there can be no yardstick. One man has as much right to claim eleven inches as another man to insist on thirteen or a third man to be content with five inches.

#### RECOGNIZED AUTHORITY.

You see you are driven, in the beginning of commerce, in the mere matter of the weights and the measures of commodities, to have a common recognition, by yourself and the man with whom you trade, of an authority from whose decision there is no appeal as to what constitutes a yard of cloth, a gallon of oil, and a ton of coal. In the much more important matter of morals, is it not indispensable to have some measure or rule of right and wrong? What is right? What is wrong? Is not the former that which is in accord with some rule and the latter that which deviates from some rule? But can there be a rule without some Supreme Person or body of persons having paramount authority?

As in the case of the cloth, let us try something which is generally supposed to have moral quality.

There is a man who has a wife and three young children. They are dependent upon him for a support. He is very useful to the community. He helps many and hurts none. He has given me all that I have and made it possible for me to grow rich and famous. One day, as he sits in the midst of his family, I kill him without any provocation. Have I done wrong, any more wrong than if I had broken a withered limb from a tree in a forest? How will you show that I have done wrong? You must appeal to some rule. What rule?

#### DATA OF MORALITY : QUESTIONS.

It is under the pressure of such a question that an agnostic sets himself to the ethical question and begins to collect "Data of Morality." When collected, of what avail are they? You might have a hundred yardsticks, and yet unless you were sure that one of them at least had been compared with the standard measure of a yard, you could not be sure that you had measured off exactly a yard of cloth. Suppose, for instance, I had discovered after long research that a certain course of action promoted the greatest good of the greatest number of human beings, and could demonstrate it so that all men would receive it, and we should decide that to pursue this course would be right and to do otherwise would be wrong: then would arise these questions :

1. Before this demonstration, before any one could know that a certain course of action would promote the greatest good of the greatest number, was the action in

accordance with that course *right* and was the opposite *wrong*?

2. Can we be perfectly sure that there was no mistake in collecting the facts and in conducting the process of reasoning? Might not that which promotes the greatest good of the greatest number in a few small cultivated English, German, French, or American circles fail to promote the greatest good of the greatest number in the mass of the population of the planet, which must embrace the Russias, the Indies, China, and Africa, with all the teeming hordes of savages in unpenetrated places of the earth? Who but a Being of infinite intelligence could ascertain what conduct would promote the greatest good of the greatest number? There must be a Personal God or else there is no distinction, except that which is merely verbal, between *right* and *wrong*. But all men, everywhere, at all times, have had the moral sense. It is ineradicable. They may differ as to *what* is right and *what* is wrong, but they never doubt the distinction. *The moral sense in man necessitates the thought of the Personal God.*

3. But suppose I am perfectly assured that a certain course of action will promote the greatest good of the greatest number: what binds me to pursue that course? What are "the greatest number" to me? They have never done any thing for me. My connections, my interests, my affections, are all concerned with much the smaller number. There are men who care for so small a number as one; "Number one," says such a man, meaning himself, "is what I am going to look after." Why should he not? Who can show any reason for not considering him to be as wise, as good, and as great a man

as his neighbor who is always insisting on the "greatest number" ? If there be no Personal God, is not the man wiser who rejects what it is impossible for any finite being to ascertain, namely, what conduct makes for the greatest good of the greatest number and the obligation of any man to pursue that course of conduct ? *The acknowledgment of the authority of conscience necessitates the thought of the Personal God.*

#### REVELATION.

For any purpose of good, great, and happy living no man need bother himself with any question as to the mode of existence of the personality of God. Let him content himself with the fact of that personality. A God is a person : He has consciousness of His own existence ; He reflects upon His own thoughts ; He has emotions ; He has conscious volitions, and He performs acts according to preconceived plans and methods and with a knowledge of their moral character.

But we men are also persons. It becomes a most important thing to know what are our relations to this august divine Person ; and of still more importance what He regards as His relations to us. How is that to be learned ? How do I know what my father, my enemy, or my jailer thinks of his relations to me if I never see him, nor hear from him, nor see anything he has done ? It is plain that if God makes no revelation of Himself I can never know any of His thoughts or feelings or volitions. The moment the thought of the Personal God is given any man, - he thinks of Him as Absolute, Infinite, and Eternal. Without some revelation from God Himself, the man can think of Him no

further, except along the lines logically suggested by these three necessary conceptions of the Personal God. He can not know whether the God agrees with the man's ideas of what is good or bad, kind or cruel, or whether He ever thinks of the man at all. He can not know whether this God made him or begat him. He does not know how to speak to God. He must wait until God speaks to him.

### THE BEGINNING.

But God has spoken ; He has made some revelation of Himself in nature, to begin with. Whether the man believes in the immediate creation of the body of the first man or holds that that body was a development of previous forms of animal existence, He can reason to God's interest in the matter because, on any theory, after the admission of the existence of God, God had every thing to do with the beginning. Just get back to the *beginning*, and there you confront *God* or *nothing*. But human nature is the very nature that abhors a vacuum and will not accept "nothing," and if you will only place it at the beginning of all beginnings it is compelled to accept God. Just write out on a piece of paper, "In the beginning," and you are obliged to put for the next word just what the next word is in the first sentence of the Bible—"God."

It does not require the most extensive or profound knowledge of man and of nature to see that whoever created this planet has a tender regard for man, a provident care for him, and high thoughts of his possibility. Indeed, a scientific knowledge of the physical constitution of the planet shows that its Maker must

have had in view the coming of a person of intelligent activity, capable of subduing, improving, and beautifying the planet, if only the materials were laid to his hand. And the Maker of the planet laid those materials to his hand, having them all completely ready for his coming and not introducing him until all those things were here.

#### MAN ANTICIPATED.

Indeed, there is no rational explanation of the constitution of the planet, except that it was made to be the workshop, the theater, the battle-field, the home of an intelligent, god-like race. Volumes could be filled with the amplification of that single sentence. Take coal, for instance. Why should the ages have been occupied in the production, the piling, the pressure, of that vast amount of vegetable matter which makes the coal measures of the planet, if no such being as man should ever inhabit this globe? No other animal needs it; but to man it has been wind in the sails of his progress, wafting him to more glorious shores of civilization. The whole planet looks like a house which a father had built and furnished for a child whose character he knows and of whose coming he was sure.

Every intelligent builder erects his structure with reference to the uses to which it is to be applied. On examination it immediately shows, by being a nest, a sty, a kennel, a stable, a residence, whether it was intended for bird, or pig, or dog, or horse, or man. It seems impossible to examine the structure of the earth without perceiving that its Creator knew that man was coming and that He took the most profound interest in man and all his belongings. Indeed, if it were not



recorded in the Scriptures it might be possible from the existence of coal to reach the suggestion that God had loved man "with an everlasting love."

#### THE BIBLE CAME EARLY.

But men were not left to the weary study of the material world, to pick out through the ages, here and there, some indication of some trait of the divine character. After the theistic idea had been revealed to man, then, and not till then, did "the invisible things of Him" become "*understood* by the things which are made," but could never have been discovered unless "God had showed it unto them" (Rom. i., 19, 20). The Bible was given to the race *early*. So after the Bible had told us that God is infinitely wise and powerful and good, that He is the source of all life, physical and spiritual, that He has plans requiring the eternities for their execution, that He is the sole holy, merciful, and just Autocrat of the Universe, having paramount legislative, judicial, and executive authority over all things, then all progress in physical science goes to illuminate what had elsewhere been revealed.

It is worthy of note that the Bible began to be given to our race in the early childhood of mankind, and that it was completed before any thing that can properly be called science arose among men. The world could not wait. It must early learn what God is, what He thinks of men, what He thinks of His relations to men, what is right and what is wrong. For all the aids which science can give to civilization the race may wait; but a code of ethics, a directory of religion, a knowledge of what man's relation is to man and what man's relation is to

God—these were absolutely required in the very beginning. And in the very beginning they began to be given. The very relation, in point of time, of the Bible's ancient revelations and the modern discoveries of science shows divine affection for man. The former were as necessary to the latter as the multiplication-table is to the integral and differential calculus, and physical science can no more overturn the Bible than the calculus can overturn the multiplication-table.

Moses's history opens with the creation : "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

John's gospel opens with the incarnation : "In the beginning was the Word : and the Word was God ; and the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us," which simply means that God voluntarily incarnated Himself.

The details of the birth of Jesus are given elsewhere in the New Testament. John simply announces the fact that He who, when the beginning began, was the very God, had become a very man.

#### "THE WORD."

From the opening of the Bible all through the Old Testament we have the *Word of God*, the Logos. The creation is represented as caused by *God speaking*. And the idea runs through the histories, the psalms, and the prophecies, and it is found in the Apocrypha and the Targums. So when the ideas of Judaism came to be modified by contact with Greek thought, there arose a sort of Judæo-Alexandrine philosophy set forth by Philo, who was a contemporary of Jesus. This philosophy may have been known to Jesus and to John. What Meyer says represents it:

“That idea of God’s essential self-revelation which took its rise from Genesis i., which lived and grew under various forms and names among the Hebrews and later Jews, but was moulded in a peculiar fashion by the Alexandrine philosophy, was adopted by John for the purpose of setting forth the abstract divinity of the Son, thus bringing to light the reality which lies at the foundation of the Logos idea. Hence, according to John, by *ὁ λόγος*, which is throughout viewed by him (as is clear from the entire Prologue down to verse 18) under the conception of a personal subsistence, we must understand nothing else than the self-revelation of the divine essence, before all time immanent in God (comp. Paul, Col. i., 15 ff), but for the accomplishment of the act of creation proceeding hypostatically from Him, and ever after operating also in the spiritual world as a creating, quickening, and illuminating personal principle, equal to God Himself in nature and glory (comp. Paul, Phil. ii., 6); which divine self-revelation appeared bodily in the man Jesus and accomplished the work of the redemption of the world.”

#### JOHN’S RELATION TO JESUS.

It is never to be forgotten that John was the intimate friend of Jesus. Other Evangelists were inspired by the Holy Ghost, but in addition to that John had the advantage of the confidential intimacy of Jesus—he rested on His bosom. He was the beloved disciple. For my own part, so thoroughly has this thought taken possession of me that I read the word of John as I would those of a stenographer who had taken the dictation of Jesus. It is the statement by Jesus of His self-consciousness. So it is proposed to read all that this apostle writes.

## THE INCARNATION FROM MAN'S SIDE.

The Incarnation is ordinarily thought of, written of, and preached of, from the side of man's necessities. We have sinned, we have become degraded as well as guilty. We need salvation and deliverance and therefore a Saviour and a Deliverer. All that means that the relation between God and man has been interrupted and must be restored if there is not to be a measureless catastrophe to each individual of the race. *We must have God.* It is this necessity which gives such glow and glory to the announcement that the Lord has bowed His heavens and come down, and that the Father of Eternity has become the Son of Man. It is every thing for us. It tells of broken chains and opened prisons and cleansed leprosy and a new life and restoration to the Father's house and perpetual ascent and endless glory. To make us know that we are His "own," that we are His "children," He has come to us *in our nature*. The fullest worship that lifts the soul, the service that most thoroughly purifies the life, can be given only to the incarnated God. The incarnation of God is, then, a human necessity.

By this is meant not a fatal necessity, but a moral and a logical necessity. Knowing God as He has revealed Himself, are we not compelled to see that His love would impel Him to appear in the flesh ?

## THE INCARNATION FROM GOD'S SIDE.

Is not *the Incarnation also a divine necessity* ? If the teaching be true that God is the Father of the human race; that He had doted on us in all eternity; that He

had created and fitted the earth to be our school; that He had created and trained the angels to be our everlasting servants; that heaven could not be heaven to God until he had His children gathered into His home; and that those children were here in the flesh bearing the burdens and strains of their moral and spiritual education; that those children had gone away from that true manhood which is the only likeness of God; that they had fallen under the degrading and despairing belief that the Father was no longer their Father; that He hated them and pursued them with malignity, while all the while, as He knew and they did not, He yearned for them with an unspeakable desire—how could He keep back, how could He stay away, how could He remain in His delightful palace while His children were pining, some in hospitals, and some in prisons, and some in noisome dens, afflicted with deafnesses, blindnesses, leprosies, paralyses, and, above all, an occasional agonizing sense of spiritual forsakenness, all which He could cure by coming in the flesh and dwelling among them—would He, could He, abstain from incarnation?

#### “SO LOVED THE WORLD.”

His intimate friend John reports from the lips of Jesus a statement of His own everlasting self-consciousness: “God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Have we not always been reading that most extraordinary statement from the human side? Did not Jesus see it also from the divine side? “God so loved the world!” How? That He must come to it, that His poor blind children may touch

Ilm and feel *in report* with Him, and know that He had the sense of coming to His "own." He "was found," was "found in fashion as a man."

As man's thought of perfection is in seeking to be divine, so God's perfection is found in being a Man. And what a Man! All the fine abstract conceptions of deity by the philosophers, all the marvelous poetic representations of Zeus-Pater by the poets, all the high thoughts of Jehovah by the Hebrew bards, all are inferior to that Man, Jesus, who dwelt among men, peasant men, rich men, poor men, doctors of divinity, priests of Israel and soldiers of Rome, and for thirty-three years walked among men so as to satisfy the demands of the human intellect and the human heart as all the other thoughts of God had failed to do, and, as we believe, satisfied the demands of God's intellect and heart as they never had been satisfied before.

What a God is the Jesus of the Evangelists! Men have never heard of any thing higher to adore. Angels never had such a revelation of God as they had in Jesus. Man was never satisfied until he beheld the realization of the ideal of Manhood in Jesus: and God was never satisfied until He gave "His only begotten Son" to "the world" and was found in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

Was not the Incarnation a divine necessity?

## II.

### The Christ's First Disciples.

## JOHN I.

(35) *Again, on the day after, John was standing and two of his disciples ;* (36) *and, looking upon Jesus as He was walking, he said, " Behold God's Lamb!"* (37) *And the two disciples heard him speak and went after Jesus.* (38) *But Jesus turning and seeing them coming after Him says to them: What [not whom] are you seeking ?" But they said to Him, " Rabbi (which being interpreted is to say " Teacher " ), where stayest Thou ? "* (39) *He says to them, " Come, and you shall see." They came and saw where He stayed, and they stayed with Him that day. It was about the tenth hour.* (40) *One of the two that heard John speak and followed Him was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.* (41) *This one first finds his own brother Simon and says to him, " We have found the Messiah," which being interpreted is, the Christ [Anointed].* (42) *He led him unto Jesus. Looking upon Him, Jesus said, " Thou art Simon, the son of John ; thou shalt be called Kephas, which is interpreted Stone" [Peter].*



## THE CHRIST'S FIRST DISCIPLES.

### THE "FORERUNNER" APPEARS.

WHEN the Incarnation took place, the world of men was at its lowest depth. It was the darkest hour of man's deepest midnight. The Greek civilization of culture was effete, the Roman civilization of power was brutal, the Jewish civilization of religion was a corpse of formalism. So blinded were all eyes then, that the Christ of God was in the world more than a quarter of a century before any one recognized Him. He had come to His own and His own had not known Him.

Then there appeared in the Jordan Valley a man of austere manners and ascetic habits who began to preach terrifically. The sinfulness of the world had struck his imagination as something surpassingly horrible. He fairly howled against it. He cried to his countrymen to repent. The sound of his voice aroused an echo in the consciences of the people, and thousands flocked to his ministry. The people of culture, the most pretentious of the day, the Pharisees and Sadducees, came to his baptism. Men who had been accustomed to be greeted in the market-places with most profound respect heard themselves called a "generation of vipers." Men who had passed as the representatives of religion were told in effect that they were no more than the stones on the river-bank. But John's baptism and

preaching were not Christian, they were not models of Christian baptism and preaching. John himself was no Christian. He was no functionary. He was a layman with a divine mission. That mission was to designate the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed of Jehovah. He knew that He was in the world. He knew he should meet Him. It would then be his business to point out the Christ and to retire from public life.

#### THE CHRIST APPEARS.

So he went on living, preaching and baptizing in such an extraordinary way as to attract universal attention, but still no man appeared in whom met the signs which John had been divinely instructed should point out the Messiah. Was it all to come to nothing? One day, as the weary and probably discouraged preacher was at his work, there came up to him a Galilean peasant of nearly his own age. John did not know that it was Jesus of Nazareth. Even if he had been told that it was Jesus there was nothing whatever in the appearance of the simple, serene man to indicate that He was Jehovah's Christ. Of all the throng no man, except the Baptist, noticed that there was any thing peculiar in the stranger. But when they confronted each other the Baptizer felt that the hour had come, and he, that was the most famous man in his land at the moment, modestly said to the stranger, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" The stranger answered him, "Suffer it." As if the voice of Jehovah had spoken to his soul John obeyed, and then all signs combined to make John know who it was that had now come to his baptism.

## THE CHRIST DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS.

After His baptism Jesus walked away from the river at which the voice of God had been heard acknowledging Him and the dove of the Spirit had settled on His head. He made no address to the crowd; He spake no word to John. Up into the wilderness He went. And nothing followed. Week after week passed without sign or wonder. Jesus was in the wilderness undergoing that terrible season of fasting and temptation. John was at the river undergoing the badgering of the minions of the Sanhedrim. At last at the close of seven weeks the divine Stranger approached the throng which were about John. How worn must John have been by the labors of his protracted meeting! How wan and ghastly Jesus, after His terrific battle and great victory!

## JOHN'S TESTIMONY.

When John saw Jesus he exclaimed, "Behold God's Lamb, which taketh away the sins of the world!" And then he added, "This is He of whom I said, 'After me cometh a man which is preferred before me'; for He *was* before me. And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." The testimony of John sets forth several things:

1. The Messiah under figure of Jehovah's Lamb, the offering selected by Jehovah for sacrifice, was familiar to his hearers, and had been familiar to their fathers from the days of Isaiah (liii., 7). *This is that Lamb*, said John.

2. No power exists in nature to relieve any man of

the guilt and consequences of his sin. If God do not provide some atonement, expiation, propitiation, then each man must suffer from the disease and bear the guilt of his own sin forever. But John testifies that this Lamb of God takes away sin.

3. He announces the Catholicity of this great salvation: the Lamb of God is not a sacrifice for the sins of His people Israel alone, but for the sins of their Roman conquerors as well, and for the sins of the whole world, so that there shall never be a man anywhere, at any time, who may not have all his sins laid upon Jesus.

4. He testifies to the pre-existence of Jesus. John the Baptist was born before Jesus. But he saw in Jesus not only his own superior but spiritual elder. He gives Him one of the Old Testament names for God (Isa. xlv., 6). He says of Jesus, "He was my First." He anticipates the claim of Jesus, "Before Abraham was, I am."

5. He acknowledges Jesus as his prince. He had come simply to be usher to Jesus. His baptism existed that that function might be discharged, namely, that he might have divine assurance that this was the Lamb of God, and that he might exhibit Him as such to the people. John the Baptist had months before stated that He, "that Light," had come, but that he could not see Him. But now when Jesus had come down out of the great temptation and John saw Him, he said: "This is He."

#### AN IMPRESSIVE NARRATIVE.

This whole narrative deserves study. The solemn stateliness with which the affair marches on is most

impressive. There is first the Incarnation, the silent coming of God into human flesh, moving nothing except the heart of one woman and that of her betrothed; and then angels appear at the birth-night, so spiritually powerful as to draw men from the East, yet making no stir at Jerusalem or in Rome, at the religious or at the political center of the world; and then thirty years of quiet life, a life which makes no more sensation in the world than that of any other very religious child of a religious peasant's family; and then the quiet, uninvited coming of Jesus into the great crowd that thronged about John's baptism, a coming which made a lull in the noise of an excited multitude; and then the descending of a dove upon Jesus, which made John know that this was He who was to administer the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and then the quiet departure of Jesus, without a word of experience, or exhortation, or adieu; and then his absence for six weeks from the field of human observation, a period of quiet but profound perplexity to the Baptist; and then his quiet, wordless reappearance, when there was borne in upon John the divine assurance that this was the Lamb of God; all is so wonderfully solemn, steady, and stately in its progress. Fixing his steadfast gaze on Jesus, with simple fervor John said, "See: the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; this is He of whom I bare witness in general that He should come; but even when I felt like declining to baptize Him, I did not know Him; even when the dove descended on Him, I did not know Him; but now I know that this is verily He." The Baptist seemed to be soliloquizing. His disciples looked first at him and then at Jesus, who was quietly

moving away. But next day, when Jesus again silently passed before them, the great teacher repeated his impressive words, apparently addressing them distinctly to his disciples, "Behold God's Lamb."

#### DISCIPLES COMING.

This made a movement among his disciples ; but it was not a great movement. Here, as generally at great revival meetings, two out of thousands ; but those two are worth all the outlay of the revival. Two left John the Baptist and went towards Jesus. John's noon had passed. It was the beginning of his decline and the decline of Judaism, as it was the dawn of the ministry of Jesus and the initiation of Christianity.

Only two. One is named, the other is not. One was Andrew ; we are sure that the other was John, the writer of this Evangel, brother of James and son of Zebedee. (1.) There is no reason to suppress the name if it was any other than that of the writer, any more than to suppress that of Andrew. (2.) The account of this transaction is too minute and vivid to be made by any other than an eye-witness. (3.) His well-known custom was to suppress his own name. And he does not even mention his brother James in all his gospel. (4.) Without this assumption we can not find a place for the entrance of John into the Christian society.

Of Andrew we do not know very much. He may have had a Hebrew name, but the name Andrew in Greek means "manly." "He may have been a Grecian on his mother's side, a conjecture, perhaps, favored by the circumstances of his introducing to Jesus certain Grecians who desired to see the Great Master (John

xii., 22). His position in the New Testament history is not nearly so important as that of his brother Peter; but the few glimpses we catch of him show the eager spirit of one anxious for the spiritual welfare of others, and who has a simple, manly trust in his great spiritual Leader. He is mentioned with three other disciples as being in a confidential interview with Jesus, making inquiries concerning the destruction of the holy city (Mark xiii., 3). He also appears in connection with the history of the feeding of the five thousand (John xv., 9). Beyond this there appears no reference to Andrew." (See my book "The Light of the Nations," a rational inquiry into the Memorabilia of Jesus, pp. 221, 222.)

#### HOW THEY CAME.

We are told that these two men "followed Jesus"—probably walked behind Him modestly, at some little distance, but eagerly. It was the beginning of His following. We can fancy Jesus, weak from the terrific struggle of the Temptation after the exciting scene at the Baptism, now walking slowly away and musing on His unique position. We are never to lose the human Jesus in the divine Christ, nor the divine Christ in the human Jesus. "Is it not now to begin?" we may fancy Him musing. "Am I to have no following from that great multitude?" Then He became conscious of the nearness of the two men. He "turned" toward them as He always did and always does to sincere seekers, however poor, or weak, or ignorant. Then He spake to them.

#### FIRST WORD OF THE CHRIST'S MINISTRY.

This came as the first word in the public ministry of Jesus: "*What seek ye?*" To the men walking along

the Jordan-bank the deep significance of the question may not have been perceived at first. Indeed, every thing depends upon the look and tone of the questioner. Jesus might have repelled them forever by His manner. He might have implied that their following was an intrusion, that He did not care to have His footsteps dogged, and that they should "go about their business." But we see from the narrative a very different light in the eye of Jesus, and we hear a very different tone in His voice.

"*What seek ye?*" That is the preliminary, penetrating, paramount question for all persons and at all times. The true answer to it will reveal to any man his real character and the trend of his whole life. "What am I seeking in life?" That must be my first question for myself, as it is the first question of Jesus to me. Every morning and night, in every visit, trade, occupation, that is the question with which I must probe myself. What am I seeking above all things in writing this book? What are you seeking in reading it? What are you seeking in your business? What was I seeking when I went to Church last Sunday? "*What?*" Mark, Jesus does not say "whom?" What are men expecting to find in Jesus?

#### THE SECOND WORD.

The suddenness of the question seemed to increase the embarrassment of Andrew and John. But embarrassed men often more readily blurt out the truth. One of them answered, "Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?" Their very reply shows that the question of Jesus had been uttered kindly. Every true minister of religion delights in



being sought. His feeling is that *if any man wants to see him he wants to see that man*. But the sanctity and reputation of the teacher of truth may be an embarrassment to the seeker after truth. The two men in this case spoke out the truth. They sought *Him*. The title "Rabbi" with which they addressed him shows that they sought Him as a teacher ; they desired to enter His school and be permanently under His instruction. And so they asked His *address*. His first word of reply was "Come." It was condescension, and kindness, and hospitality, and the offer of friendship. It was like God; it was like Jesus. "Come, only come and ye shall see," was the confident promise of the Great Teacher.

#### WHAT IS "A CHURCH"?

In some little hut He had procured, or in the booth of some friend who was attending this Baptist camp-meeting, down there by the Jordan, was the first meeting which ever assembled of persons who were to be Christians. Any two people who come together *in the name of the Lord* constitute a church, because there are then always three present, one being Jesus ; and where Jesus and two of His followers are, there is a church. The old proverb *Tres faciunt ecclesiam*, "Three make a church," is always true when one of the three is Jesus : not "a church" in the sense in which modern ecclesiastics use the word, but in the New Testament sense of Jesus and the Apostles, namely, an assembly of believers, organized or unorganized.

What was said by Teacher and disciples at that afternoon meeting no man can know. But it was a crisis in the spiritual lives of the two men and of the world. It

began a new life in John. He never forgot the day nor the hour. Years and years after, when Jerusalem had been destroyed and Peter and Paul had died, John put on record that that wonderful meeting *was about four o'clock in the afternoon*. The result we know. All their lives these men had been looking for the Messiah, the Anointed of God, to take away the sins of their people; and now they had found Him. The story has been told of a Greek mathematician that he had long been seeking to construct the demonstration of a geometrical proposition. It occurred to him while in the bath. Forgetful of his nude condition, he was so overjoyed that he rushed into the street shouting, "Eureka! Eureka!" *I have found it!* So, in the ecstasy of his joy ran Andrew to his brother Simon, a very rough specimen of a Galilean fisherman, and shouted out to him, "We have found the Messias!" It was the rapture of a fresh and thorough conversion. It was irresistible. It "took him to Jesus." Andrew's first and early return to his Master was with a new convert, and that convert was his own brother.

The work was begun. Three wonderful days had been passed. On the first John the Baptist had borne his general testimony to the character of the Coming One. The second day he had applied that declaration specifically and concretely to Jesus, who had now arrived. On the third day he repeated the testimony, and it bore fruit in opening the ministry of Jesus and forming the first band of discipleship. Then Jesus started towards Galilee and found Philip and Nathanael, thus enlarging that little company and changing the whole character and destiny of our humanity.

## PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THIS HISTORY.

There are some practical lessons to be gathered in this late age of the Church from the history of the beginning of discipleship.

1. The value of testimony. So much reliance is now placed upon argument. We must prove every thing. But as religion is a thing of fact and experience we can not prove it by logical processes. All that is worth any thing in this department is testimony. If I am sick and my friend has had the same sickness, all I care to know is : (1) that he is now well, and (2) who has cured him. My friend may be the most learned man in the world, or the plainest of simple men, and may spend hours in describing the medicine and in showing me *how* it will act on the bodily organs, or in eulogizing its curative qualities : it will all be of no avail to me. Are you now well ? Who cured you ? Those are the only questions I care to have answered. It is so in religion. We desire to know that a man whose life was an eruption of sin is now in sweet and perfect spiritual health. "I was blind, but now I see. A man called Jesus did what opened my eyes" : that is worth a thousand volumes on optics and *materia medica*. John testified, "There is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world" ; and that won Andrew. Andrew testified, "We have *found* the Messiah" ; and that won Peter. The testimony was personal and direct, and therefore convincing.

2. In propagating the discipleship of Jesus, it is to be observed that while the greater often leads the less, it very often is the case that the less converts the greater. John was undoubtedly superior to his brother James, but

Andrew never took so high a position as his brother Peter. It is not the number of talents but the industrious use of them which is productive of good. In religious propagandism, above all things is character. The reality of the spiritual change and the sincerity of the witness to that change are indispensable for winning men to Christ.

3. We have here another example of the value of small meetings. In modern times we lay such stress on massing people together, on crowds, on great gatherings, and all that kind of thing. But what a study the "small meetings" of the Bible would make: Noah and his family in the ark; God and Moses on Horeb; the three "Hebrew children" in the fiery furnace; the prophet and his servant on the mountain; the angel and Mary at the annunciation; the little company at the Transfiguration; Jesus and the woman at the well; Paul and Silas in prison; and this first church meeting of Christianity—what wonderful things have followed!

4. In the individual life, the main thing is to *follow* Jesus. We may learn all that the greatest prophets can teach us of Jesus, but if we do not follow Him until He speak to us we shall make no progress. If Andrew and John had not followed Jesus they would have been lost in the multitude of the unknown and unrecorded who remained to enjoy the spectacular scenes on the banks of the Jordan. It is practical action that brings knowledge. "Come," said Jesus, "and ye shall see." Movement, not musing, that is what is demanded. Andrew and John might have heard the voice of Jesus and stood where He addressed them and lost the profit and pleasure, the delight and the honor, of inaugurating the grand, long

line of Christian discipleship. "Come," says Jesus. Let us go reverently up to the place where He dwells and stay there with Him.

5. Every disciple is a missionary. Whoever truly finds Jesus has a desire to have others see Him. No energy should be lost in romancing. The convert in the far East need not have romantic ideas of crossing oceans and continents to convert the American Indian. Andrew heeded the testimony of John the Baptist and brought John the Evangelist to follow Jesus. When, from personal interview, he was persuaded that this was the Messiah, he did not rush back to the Jordan, crowd or push up to Jerusalem to find his mission-field. He found *his brother*, his own brother, and bore his testimony to *him*, and brought him to Jesus. That is our example. The unconverted man next to me is my field. And there is no time to be lost.

## ANDREW, THE FIRST DISCIPLE.

Andrew begins at the nearest point—his own household. There is no postponement for a complete plan or for great occasions. His heart is full, and he does what he can. How soon this spirit in all His followers would bring the world to His feet !

—BISHOP HUNTINGDON.

So far as we know, Andrew lived but to utter that one sentence: “We have found the Christ.”—S. GREEN, D.D.

The apostle who occupies the first place in the Church's yearly festivals proves to have been one who sought not the first place for himself, and yet found it. He is always lost in another's brightness. He never puts himself prominently forward. Only once is he related to have spoken to our Lord, and then it was in dutiful reply to the question, “How many loaves have ye?” Another person is always found standing by his side, participating in his privileges, halving his honors, sharing his joys.

—DEAN BURGOT.

### III.

#### **The Christ's First Miracle.**

## JOHN II.

(1) *And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee ; and the mother of Jesus was there : (2) and Jesus also was bidden, and His disciples, to the marriage. (3) And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, " They have no wine." (4) Jesus saith unto her, " What [is that] to thee and to Me, O woman ? Is not Mine hour yet come ? " (5) His mother saith to the servants, " Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." (6) Now there were six water-pots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, " Fill the water-pots with water." (7) And they filled them up to the brim. (8) And He saith unto them, " Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast." And they bare it. (9) And when the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants which had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast calleth the bridegroom, (10) and saith unto him, " Every man setteth on first the good wine ; and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse : thou hast kept the good wine until now." This beginning of His miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory ; and His disciples believed in Him.*



## THE CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE.

### BACK TO NAZARETH.

THE new little brotherhood recently formed at Bethabara, on the Jordan, now moved in a body toward Galilee. Back to Nazareth went Jesus. A very important portion of His life had been spent in the two months of His absence from His home. He had been accredited as the Christ of God. He had fought His great battle with evil in the wilderness of the Temptation. He had formed His first band of discipleship. He moved back to Galilee, accompanied by those disciples, namely: Andrew, John, and Peter, and perhaps Nathanael, and afterward Philip.

It was a two days' journey to Nazareth. What conversation the men had with their new Master we may all conjecture, but may never know. More and more, as they could bear it, Jesus let in on the spiritual eyes of His friends the light which was to prepare them for the ministry in which they were to be His assistants. It was a season in which they would become somewhat more intellectually and spiritually adjusted to this high companionship. They were on the eve of the first miracle of Jesus, which John relates.

The particularity with which the minutiae of this event are mentioned renders it quite certain that the historian John was one of the party; and that he, and Andrew, and Peter, and Philip went forward with their

new Rabbi, detaching themselves from John the Baptizer and attaching themselves to Jesus the Messiah. From Bethabara, on the Jordan, where the last incident is mentioned, to Cana in Galilee, there would be parts of three days consumed in the journey. Jesus would pass through Nazareth by the most natural route. Perhaps there He would be told that His mother had gone to Cana, to the wedding of some familiar friend of the family, and that an invitation had been left for Him, and any friend who might be with Him, to follow her as speedily as convenient. His friends continue with Him, and they go in a body to Cana. There an event in the life of Jesus occurs which make the most memorable wedding upon record.

#### THE MOST CELEBRATED WEDDING.

The marriage of no imperial party has been so frequently mentioned as this of these unknown peasants of Galilee. No wedding has evoked from genius so many poems and so many passages of eloquence. ("Light of the Nations," p. 121.) Indeed, for centuries no royal marriage has occurred in any capital of Christendom without attention to this extraordinary "marriage in Cana of Galilee," and more copies of accounts of this wedding-feast have been printed in more languages of the earth than that of any other wedding-feast which has been since the world began. Who the parties were we do not know. One of them may have been of the family of Alpheus, who resided in this Cana, a place which is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and is called Cana of Galilee to distinguish it from two other villages of Palestine of the same name.

## THE GOING TO A PLEASURE PARTY.

But these things are not very important. We are concerned with the main Personage in the group. It arrests our attention that He should be coming with the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon Him, returning from the long fast and the fearful spiritual conflict, and from the ministry of the ascetic John the Baptizer, who had come neither eating nor drinking; and that His first movement should be social and His first visit be to a feast. But so it was. He never seemed holier than on this journey. Perhaps, except at the Last Supper, He was never more deeply engaged in spiritual exercises. And yet He went to "a party," a party of feasting and social pleasure. That is very shocking to the ideas of holiness held by not a few people. Indeed, do not most people regard a holy man as one who must not touch any enjoyment of life, but to throw it down, as one who could not be holy and healthy at the same time because health is such a pleasure? Is it not generally held that dyspepsia is essential to holiness? Are not the saints all lean, meager, and cadaverous in their portraits? But here is Jesus, Lord of the Saints, in the fullness of a ripe manhood, in the most responsible position ever held by any man, and at a juncture of His history in which all the spiritual universe was profoundly interested, going off with His friends to a pleasure party! We remind ourselves that, without performing any miracle, He had been building up His sanctity for thirty years, and was so holy that, without a word, the sight of Him had awed the awful John Baptist. Perhaps we have had wrong ideas of holiness.

Let us suppose that on reaching Nazareth Jesus received the message left by His mother and had communicated it to His disciples. What would they think? What would they do? They were recent converts to the Holy Jesus from the ranks of the severe, austere, self-sacrificing John. "What would they do?" Just what their Master did. It was too early in the work of Jesus for any of His followers to have reached such "advanced thought" and such "self-experience" as to say to their Master, "Well, go, if You can reconcile it to *Your* conscience; but we are too young in the cause to be present at such frivolities." No; they went with Jesus and had perhaps a whole morning's talk with Him about the affairs of the Kingdom during that walk of nearly four hours from Nazareth to Cana.

Then came the miracle.

#### JESUS THE GLORIFICATION OF NATURE.

The run of John's gospel shows that this author had the insight to perceive that *Jesus is the glorification of nature*. As the incarnated Son of God He was the ripe, consummate flower of humanity. In His works He glorified that nature which had been lying around our humanity as a thing meaningless beyond its capability of satisfying our bodily wants. Jesus transfigured everything He touched, and John relates these miracles of such glorification, the first of which is this turning of water into wine. It is to be noted that this miracle was not performed in Athens, the center of civilization, nor in Rome, the center of power, nor in Jerusalem, the center of religion, nor before the immense crowds that thronged John at Jordan, but in a small circle of simple



Galilean folk, in a little village in a remote part of an obscure province of the empire. The whole affair in all its essence and accessories is at the farthest possible remove of every thing that suggests charlatanry.

### THE MOTHER OF JESUS.

In the progress of the feast the mother of our Lord comes forward. She is called by John "the mother of Jesus," her name being suppressed, as is the custom with this author. But could a more beautiful, tender, and suggestive name be given to any woman than "the mother of Jesus"? Not much parade of her is made in the Evangely. We have glimpses of her at the annunciation, at the visit to Elizabeth, at the birth of Jesus, in the Temple looking for Jesus, at this feast, and at the cross. But she held no official relation and took no foremost place in the discipleship. She is not so prominent as that sweet and injured saint Mary of Magdala, who is mentioned just as often as the mother, who rendered more aid to the work of Jesus, and to whose dear eyes, and not to those of the mother, the risen Son of God first showed Himself after His resurrection.

But here we have Mary "the mother of Jesus," and some indications of her characteristics. She approached her Son and said to Jesus, "They have not wine." To understand this announcement and what followed we must remember that Jesus and His disciples had been some time in the house, that John most probably had seen Mary, and that there had been ample time for conversation. The theme dearest to Mary would be her Son. He had been growing in sanctity all these thirty years, and she was now half a century old ; and although she

had had other children they had probably married and settled away from her while this holy celibate eldest child had remained to support and comfort her. The theme most absorbing to the disciples was what had happened at the baptism and at the simple inauguration of the new faith; and they would tell her all that, and her confidence would grow rapidly; and if they told her what Jesus Himself had said to Nathanael, who, by the way, resided in Cana, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," she might very rightfully have expected that now He would show forth the mighty power that resided in Him.

#### THE MOTHER'S SPEECH TO HER SON.

Now was the occasion. For some reason, undue provision on the part of the entertainers or an unexpected accession of guests, the wine—the common beverage of the country—began to run low. It may have occurred to the mother that supplying a need, helping in straits, showing benevolence, would combine to make a motive for some intervention of the Son, so she approached Him and simply said, "They have not wine"—that is, wine enough to serve all the guests.

The speech showed (1) her *womanliness*. She had reared a family. She had for thirty years been concerned with domestic matters. Much more quickly than a man would she perceive when there was about to arise any little household embarrassment. (2.) It shows her *neighborliness*. These people were her friends: they had undoubtedly interchanged civilities. They may have visited Mary's house. At any rate, there were kind re-

lations between their family and hers, so much that we may suppose that Jesus was acquainted with some members of the family He was now visiting. Neighbors can show unpurchasable kindness to neighbors. In emergencies like this neighborly help should be afforded. (3.) It shows her *motherliness*. She did not go to any other of the men at the feast. She went to her ever-thoughtful, ever-considerate, ever-helpful Son. She believed from her former experience that He could do something, and recent events justified her in believing that He could do much. (4.) I venture the suggestion that it showed her *religiousness*. She believed in the God of the prophets, and believed that the power of that God had come upon her miraculously-conceived Son. We are never to forget that she never forgot that Jesus had come into the world as no other human child had ever been born, and that what had occurred in the last hundred hours must have greatly revived the solemn religiousness which had pervaded her being from the moment of the annunciation until she held her Divine Darling in her arms. And yet (5) it showed some indiscretion. If she was looking for miraculous help she might have felt quite sure that He who could and would perform a miracle would know what was needed and how the need was to be supplied. It was a moment of failure of spiritual insight upon the part of the simple, sweet, holy mother of our Lord. Nothing more. All she said was, "They have not wine;" there is wine lacking.

#### THE SON'S REPLY TO HIS MOTHER.

As it stands in our common English version the reply of Jesus is not so plain. It is this: "Woman, what

have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come." It would seem that even the reader, who knew nothing of Greek, must fancy that this is a bad translation ; and it is, perhaps, one of the very worst, inasmuch as it seems to convey nothing that is in the original, and it suggests what we do not find there. To the English ear it sounds coarse, enigmatical, repulsive. But it has none of those characteristics. The words are : " What to thee and Me, woman ? Has not My hour come ? " Let us put ourselves back by imagination into the very group, carrying with us all our present knowledge of the character as well as the history of the two who hold this conversation.

In the first place, it is inconceivable that Jesus should ever be rude to any woman under any circumstances, least of all to the woman who had cared for His human infancy and for whose widowhood in advancing years He had cared. It is to be noted that He does not call her " mother," for reasons which will appear. But " woman " was not in His time an address of reproach in any land. Dion Cassius represents the noble Augustus as saying with kindness to Egypt's splendid queen, Cleopatra, " Woman, keep a good heart." Other such examples are outside the Holy Scriptures. Elsewhere Jesus employed the same mode of address to this same mother as when from the cross (John xix., 20) He said, " Woman, behold thy Son," and immediately said to John, " Behold thy mother." If He felt affection for His mother it must have been when He was dying. He showed that by making her His last earthly care. It may also be noticed that the last word of Jesus in His communication with men was " mother," when He said to John " Behold thy *mother*." It is further to be noted that



the first words uttered by Jesus after His resurrection, addressed to His dearest female friend, and spoken in utmost compassion was, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Then the "woman" spoken to the mother at Cana's wedding-feast was not abrupt and uncivil. Indeed, but for the conventional artificiality of society the comprehensive word "woman" would everywhere be a title of greater honor than the polite, discriminating "lady."

Nor is the next word any thing but respectful. The equivalent is found in the Hebrew. Wherever used in Holy Scripture it always implies respect for the persons to whom it was addressed. Read Josh. xxii., 24, Judges xi., 12, 2 Sam. xvi., 10, 1 Kings xvii., 18, 2 Kings iii., 13, Matthew viii., 29, and Mark i., 24. But it seems also to imply a rejection of the proposal, a denial of any thing in common on the subject under discussion between the interlocutors, or an intimation of difference in relationship. So here.

#### AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION.

If Jesus saw in Mary a disposition to make an indiscreet use of motherly authority, what He said was a respectful dissent from any such assumption. It was not the first time that they had met in that attitude. When He was but twelve years of age Mary and Joseph had left Him in Jerusalem, and when they returned and found Him in the Temple, Mary said, "Son, why hast Thou dealt so with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing!" The very suggestion that Joseph was *His* "father" aroused in the boy a new and powerful sentiment. He may have regarded the worthy carpenter as His father up to that point, but

when His mother seemed to claim paternity for Joseph, there rose up in Jesus a great feeling of holding a great position in the universe. Mary would never forget that wonderful expression which came from the Divine Boy's face as He said : " My father? Why, did you not know that I have been here about my Father's business? " That look came into His face again when Mary told of the failing wine. There was a tender reproach in the tone in which He said, " What is that to thee? " As if He had said, " You dear woman, you allow even the little discomforts of your neighbors to harass you ; what responsibility have you in this case? Do not fret." And then there arose up in Him the feeling that He had reached a crisis in His career as He asked, " And what to me? " There may have been a pause and look of profound meditation and the sweep of a majestic light over His countenance as He said, in deeply impassioned tones, and as if in soliloquy, " Has not My hour come? " He had never performed a miracle. The silly stories of His boyhood which come down to us, telling how He had made birds of dirt for the amusement of the children of Nazareth, and how at a sweep of His hands those birds took life and flew away, are very foolish stories. But the miracle-working power now first stirred within Jesus (vs. 11).

#### HOW MARY RECEIVED IT.

And Mary saw it and understood. She did not feel rebuked. She did not even feel repelled. She had no consciousness of having either said or done any thing improper. There was nothing in the words or looks or tones of Jesus that was not most respectful. To a most

wretched translation we owe the screeds of nonsense written by the "fathers" (and their sons) about this interview. The words of Jesus were, "What to thee, and to Me? Has not My hour come?" His question to His mother may have suggested the question to Himself, and that may have stirred His consciousness and suggested His third question. And in His soul the answer to that question was that His Messianic hour *had* come.

Mary's spiritual insight united with her maternal instincts to assure her that something great was about to be done. She seemed to have some authority in that house. She ordered the servants to do whatever He directed. That very injunction shows the growing faith of the human mother in the divine Son.

#### WHAT JESUS DID.

It was a religious household. According to the traditional Jewish ritual for domestic religious rites, there were placed in convenient position, probably in the court of the house, six water-pots, "after the manner of the purifying of the Jews" (Matt. xv., 2; Mark vii., 3). No estimate of the contents of these six jars is less than a hundred gallons. Jesus ordered them to be filled with water, and He was obeyed so strictly that they were filled to the brim. No more could be poured in. Then, with a delicate humility unknown to workers in magic, to charlatans, and to jugglers, He said to the servants: "Draw out now and bear to the ruler of the feast." He does not call to the servants and say, "See now what I have done. You will bear Me witness that it was water, and everybody will see that this is wine." How simple, how majestic, how godlike His behavior was!

How "godlike"? Where have men painted any God like that? Whatever may be said of the other portion of the Bible, the seventh and eighth verses of the second chapter of John's gospel must be of superhuman authorship. There is no other way for accounting for their existence in literature. There is nothing in Homer or Æschylus, nothing in Dante or Milton, nothing in Shakespeare or Goethe, to suggest that the genius of any one of them, or of all combined, could have produced those sentences. If they were the production of the unaided genius of a Syrian peasant, then that Galilean fisherman has achieved what all the other poets have found to be the impossible.

If this affair at Cana did not take place *as recorded*, then John saw a god in his vision, and in the simplest words has revealed that god to us.

If it did take place it was a miracle, and nothing less and nothing more. Whether all the water was turned to wine before the servants began to carry it to the feasters, or in its passage to the "governor of the feast," or as the guests were drinking, we do not know; nor is it a matter of the least importance that we should. It was a miracle. We do not need to explain any thing allowed to be a miracle. The only explanation of a miracle is that it was a miracle.

#### PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Let us learn some lessons :

1. Although there is nothing to show that Jesus repelled or rebuked His mother, it is certain that He called her by a term of respect, and spoke to her words which seem to indicate that while she saw the situation with

the eyes of a mother and a neighbor, He saw it with the eyes of Jehovah's Messiah. His whole behavior shows that, while men will always respect the mother of Jesus, she has no more place in His reign of grace than any other gracious woman.

2. This narrative shows, as all other miracles of Jesus show, that He will never consent to use His divine power for any self-glorification or for the gratification of the curiosity of personal wishes of His friends. It is like God to supply human needs but not to gratify human whims.

3. He will do what is necessary to establish the faith of His disciples; but "His glory" is "manifested" by the faith of those who love Him and not by any mere objectless display of omnipotence.

4. He has all power over nature. He can transfigure and transform without carrying any thing through its natural processes. Without soil or seed, or air or grape-fruit, He can produce wine. What we call "laws of nature" are merely expressions of the modes of the workings of Jesus, but He began to make the worlds before there was any law of nature. He made nature. He is over nature. He is supernatural. He can be trusted to do all possible things.

5. With all His power and holiness nothing in human affairs is too trivial for His attention. He taught the courtesies of life. He taught that holy men are not to fly from the pleasures of social life on account of the temptations therein, for that would be to do evil that good might come, an experiment which always fails. It would be the laziness which "refuses the bounty to save the labor of seeking the grace."

6. He taught His disciples that a good man need never decline to go to the place where duty calls him because the tongue of slander may assail him. If the Son of God did what He did, knowing that it would cause Him to be called a wine-bibber, who am I that I should be so exquisitely sensitive about my reputation as to decline my social duties?

7. If celibacy as a rule were right, Jesus would not have gone to Cana's *wedding-feast*. There are positions in which good men may be placed, as Jesus was placed, which providentially demonstrates to them that they must not marry. But in each individual case it must be God who commands the celibacy. It is criminal, under any circumstances, for any man to take a vow of celibacy. It is blasphemous, as it assumes the prerogative of God.

8. It gives the highest possible sanction to marriage. If marriage were, as the living crazy Russian novelist declares, a vile thing, and children born in marriage or born anyhow are the product of filth and vice, then Jesus would not have "adorned with His presence and first miracle" that marriage in Cana of Galilee. No, by His apostle He helps our spiritual insight by showing us that marriage sets forth the mystical union which is between Christ and His Church. It shows that a man and a woman may stand in such relation to each other that the husband is always ready to die for the wife as Jesus died for the Church, and the wife stands always in expectation of the husband's coming, listening for no other footfall but His; and the bride, the Church, is always looking for and hasting the coming of her Lord.

9. In every thing this miracle helps us to see that the

spiritual is the basis of the material, is the real substance of the universe, and to be spiritually minded is to be looking at that which is unseen and eternal. This is delicately set forth in the poem of James Freeman Clarke :

Dear Friend, whose presence in the house,  
Whose gracious word benign,  
Could once at Cana's wedding-feast  
Turn water into wine,—

Come, visit us, and when dull work  
Grows weary line on line,  
Revive our souls, and make us see  
Life's water glow as wine.

Gay mirth shall deepen into joy,  
Earth's hopes shall glow divine,  
When Jesus visits us, to turn  
Life's water into wine.

The social talk, the evening fire,  
The homely household shrine,  
Shall glow with angels' visits, when  
The Lord pours out the wine.

For when self-seeking turns to love  
Which knows not mine and thine,  
The miracle again is wrought,  
And water changed to wine.

That our Saviour's working a miracle when he was at the marriage-feast should teach us, by his example, that in our chearful and free times, when we indulge a little more than ordinary to mirth amongst our friends, we should still be mindful of God's honour and glory, and lay hold upon an occasion of doing all the good we can. As Christ was personally invited to, and bodily present at, this marriage-feast, when here on earth; so he will not refuse now in heaven to be spiritually present at his people's marriages. They want his presence with them upon that great occasion; they desire and seek it; he is acquainted with it, and invited to it, whoever is neglected. And where Christ is made acquainted with the match, he will certainly make one at the marriage. Happy is that wedding where Christ and his friends are the invited, expected, and enjoyed guests.

—W. BURKITT, A.M., 1780.



## IV.

### The Secret Disciple.

### JOHN III.

(1) *Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews :* (2) *the same came unto Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him."* (3) *Jesus answered, and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God."* (4) *Nicodemus saith unto him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born ?"* (5) *Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*

## THE SECRET DISCIPLE.

### THE CHRIST'S INSIGHT INTO MAN.

AFTER the miracle at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, Jesus and His family and His school moved in a body to Capernaum. The reasons for this movement are not given. Nor was the stay long. The Passover soon called them to Jerusalem, where Jesus drove the merchants out of the Temple. His acts and words increased the numbers of those who believed on His name with that kind of belief which is the mere result of wonder at sudden exhibitions of power. But they had not so worked His principles into their character as to be willing to either live or die for Him. In the close of the second chapter of St. John's gospel it is recorded that Jesus did not believe in them, did not treat them as perfectly trusted disciples, because He knew all things. "He knew what was in man."

When we see a man, ordinarily we simply receive on the retina of our eyes the figure produced by the man's phenomena; sometimes we see more deeply and penetrate somewhat into his character; but when Jesus looked on a human being He saw that which was "*in him*," that spirit which is the man himself. To Him the man's spirit was stark naked and visible.

Immediately after this statement of Christ's insight, and as an illustrative case thereof, the record is given of one man, a semi-believer, whose interview with Jesus

was of a most important character. His name is given. It was a Greek name, but common in Palestine in the days of Jesus. It was Nicodemus. It is observable that sometimes names are given in the Gospel history and sometimes omitted. We have Mary of Magdala, sweet saint, and we have a "certain" nameless woman who touched the hem of His garment and was made whole. Perhaps some one will find the clue to this discrimination. There must be some reason ; there is nothing accidental in the Bible.

#### NICODEMUS.

There is more than ordinary statement of subordinate facts in this man's case. His *name* is given. His *sect* is mentioned. He was a Pharisee. The Pharisees were the best of the sects. A Pharisee was much better than a materialistic Sadducee. As a Pharisee he was much more exacting, requiring his own life and that of those whom he would approve and with whom he would associate to be very near the standard of perfection in outward morality. So far did he carry this that he rested his hope of final salvation upon the conformity of his external life to the literal statements of the moral law. He prided himself, as Saul of Tarsus did, on his having been "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers." He was sanctimonious. He was scientific. He belonged to that class who were expected to examine every new candidate for popular favor, who acted only as they were expected to act when they went down to the Jordan to examine the claims of John the Baptist, when the fame of his preaching reached Jerusalem.

His *rank*, also, is given. He was a member of the Sanhedrim. He belonged to a body which united the functions and dignities of the Senate and Supreme Court of the United States, a body whose sanction was necessary to establish the position of any one who claimed to be prophet or teacher. The populace would not acknowledge any to be "the very Christ" until his claim had been allowed by "the rulers," that is to say the Sanhedrim.

This gentleman, this scholar, this ruler—none higher in Jerusalem—did a very unusual thing. He called on a young Peasant from Galilee who had made an uproar in the Temple and brought the Wall Street of Jerusalem down upon Him. The ruler did not send for the young Galilean that he might examine Him, but actually paid this rude, uneducated Preacher the compliment of a visit. Nicodemus was not a hypocrite. There is no just ground for supposing any sinister motive. He was a slow man of heavy temperament and judicial cast of mind, quite candid and fair. But he shared the feeling of the populace in being excited by the personality and deeds of this extraordinary young Prophet from Nazareth. The conviction must have forced itself very deeply and very strongly into his nature that here was a man whose case was worth his immediate investigation both as a man and as a Sanhedrist.

#### HIS NIGHT VISIT TO THE CHRIST.

So he came to Jesus. He came by night. Why? It was not fear. That is not alleged in the history. There was nothing to fear. As a ruler he had a right to examine this case. He might even have consulted other members of the Sanhedrim, as one of his phrases inti-

mated he had done. There seems to have been every reason why he should have come by night. His official business must have been greatly increased during the Passover and would occupy his day; and during the day Jesus was in the Temple; night would give quiet for talk, and it was simply prudent that a man in his position should not make any intimation to the populace even of his examination of the case until prepared to announce a decision. But it is remarkable that whenever the Nicodemus is mentioned by John it is always as the night-comer. So when he stood up for Jesus in the Sanhedrim (vii., 50), and so when he went out to take tender care of the body of the Lord after the crucifixion (xix., 39).

He came just as he was; so in the Greek, "*this* man"; in the English common version, "the same." Men, even the strongest, can not surrender all prejudices at once nor at once break through all conventionalities. And no man need strive to make himself other than he is when coming to Jesus. Nicodemus probably found John present with Jesus. The narrative sounds like something related by a witness who had seen and heard. Nicodemus could not have related the conversation; and it is not probable that Jesus did. The report of the interview is vivid.

#### PROMPT DISCOURSE.

Nicodemus went right at it. There does not seem to have been any preliminary talk about the weather, or about exciting political subjects, or about Jerusalem-gossip. The very opening of his speech shows a frank caution. "Rabbi, we know that from God Thou hast come

—a teacher.” That is the precise order of the words he is reported to have uttered. As spoken by Nicodemus what does this mean? In the first place it is most courteous. To the appellation “Rabbi” great respect was attached. It was given to no common teacher. It was a title most ardently sought by all who were engaged in teaching. “We know” can be variously interpreted. It may have been carefully selected to shield the speaker from personal and special responsibility for the opinion he was about to utter. It was the formula which the proud Scribes were accustomed to employ when about to pronounce an opinion upon which they had agreed, dissent from which they regarded as equivalent to heresy. It certainly implies that others of his rank and office joined with him in what he was about to utter. One of them is known to us by name, Joseph of Arimathea. Perhaps Nicodemus was willing to imply that the whole Sanhedrim, down in their hearts, really believed what he was about to say, and that perhaps, if he should be able to report favorably of this interview, the whole body might be brought to an open admission of all that Jesus claimed. It certainly was a recognition of the lofty intellectual and moral qualities of Jesus by the class of his people who could speak with the highest authority in such matters.

#### GREAT ADMISSIONS.

It was an admission of His divine right. They knew that He had “come from God.” That was a great concession. If He had come from God they were obliged to give Him the attention to which such a divine ambassador was entitled.

Nicodemus spoke either in Hebrew or Aramaic. If he employed the word in either language which is the parallel to "come," it might be supposed to imply that they believed Jesus to be "the Coming One" and thus grant Him the honors of the Messiah. If open to that interpretation it was immediately withdrawn by the word which follows—"a teacher." That would be simply to admit that He was one of the teachers or prophets whom God sent into the world from time to time. The Messiah was not to be simply a teacher, but a king. And the apparent admission is further guarded by the assignment of a logical reason for their belief: "No man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him."

1. Then, we have the opinion of those most capable of forming an opinion and of the persons whose authority in these matters is most authoritative, that Jesus had a divine legation, which legation was attested, as was that of Moses, by the performance of miracles which could not be wrought without divine power. He is not simply indorsed as a miracle-worker. He might do marvelous things by the aid of the devil, like those recorded in the seventh chapter of Exodus. He would then be merely a magician. But we have now the certification of the chief authority of the times and his country to the surpassing greatness and divine character of the miracles of Jesus.

2. From what Nicodemus said we see that all that the Pharisees and the rulers felt they needed was a teacher, not a Saviour. That is also the difficulty of our modern times. It is believed that men can be saved by "culture," the gospel of education being all that is needed ;



whereas it is easy to show by a generalization from multitudes of instances that every man, woman, and child now in the human population of the world might be intellectually cultivated to the greatest height ever attained by any mortal, and yet earth be a very hell. The intellectual heresy of the time of Jesus is the intellectual heresy of the nineteenth century.

3. We also see that the war made against Jesus to the bitter end of His crucifixion was waged by the Jews from hatred of His pure personality and against the conclusions of their own minds. And from that time to this the ablest antagonists of Jesus have always been hypocrites, in the sense that they have acted against their convictions. The men of our age who blaspheme and would crucify Jesus would, if they were not such hypocrites, acknowledge, "We know that Thou art come from God." The moral crime of the time of Jesus is also the moral crime of the nineteenth century.

4. But what a fall there was in this introductory speech of Nicodemus ! He had come to talk about the kingdom of God, and he falls to mere science. He had come to learn something about the man who might be the King of the coming kingdom, and he drops to talk about a school ! The spiritual insight of Jesus saw Nicodemus through and through, and, waiving all that was said or implied by what he had spoken, Jesus anticipated the question which was in the soul of this really sincere seeker after truth, and plunged at once into the subject.

#### JESUS DOGMATIC.

Jesus was never more dogmatic. We can perhaps have an idea of His estimate of Nicodemus from His reply. To

no man who was not honest could Jesus have made such a speech as He addressed to Nicodemus. Whatever may have been his frailties of character or temperament, into whatever confusion of thought he may have fallen in regard to teacher, prophet, and Messiah, as his speech showed,—great confusion for a man who generally thought so clearly,—manifestly Jesus supposed that this man, who seemed to be a mere rationalist, giving reasons for believing instead of surrendering his life to the truth, this Nicodemus, at the bottom of his heart, really desired to be a loyal subject of the kingdom of God. Therefore did the mysterious young Prophet address to him most respectfully a statement of the indispensable qualification for such citizenship, the very thing which Nicodemus most wished to know. It is to be noticed that He did not first attempt to overthrow the errors of Nicodemus, or to clear the fog from his nature. Jesus knew that the entrance of the light of truth would scatter all darkness. With a look which Nicodemus must have felt searching him to the core of his existence Jesus said: “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born from above he can not see the kingdom of God.*” Let us analyze this sentence.

1. It was addressed to the reason and the heart of Nicodemus. If Jesus was “from God” He could speak with authority. To the opinion of the Sanhedrim He could, and did, oppose His single voice unsupported and needing no support. They said, “We know;” He said, “I say.” They expressed their opinion as the product of a course of reasoning; He made His utterance as the expression of paramount authority. There might be appeal from their opinions;

there is none from His authority. What they said was human and might be challenged ; what He said was divine, and was to be received without question. All one has to do is simply to learn what it means.

2. The sentence is very positively introduced by the formula, "Verily, verily." The words about to be uttered were not a theme for a debate ; they were God's final thought on the subject. They did not concern trivial and temporary matters, but struck their roots into the depths of humanity and divinity and eternity ; therefore, the preface is most solemn, "Verily, verily, I say."

3. He makes this great truth of concern to each individual man. That is Christ's manner. Other teachers set forth general truths. Jesus individualizes and does not commingle. Other teachers fail of success because they are striving to promote the good of the individual by promoting the general weal—a plan which has always failed, and in the nature of things must always fail. Jesus reaches the commonwealth by advancing each individual—a plan which, in the nature of things, must always succeed, because, as one reason, each individual stands in himself, while the community, the family, the municipality, or the State, does not stand in itself, but stands in the individual. There may be the individual without the community, but not the community without the individual. "I say unto *thee*."

4. And then the terms of individual citizenship are common to all and indispensable for each : there is no entering the kingdom for any man which is not necessary for every man. "Except *a man* be born from above he can not see the kingdom of God," must

mean that *no man* can see that kingdom who has not had that experience. High-priest, Sanhedrist, Pharisee, Scribe, must go through precisely the same process necessary for Gentile, pagan, and the heathen proselyte. This must have been a sharp saying for Nicodemus, as it is for any gentleman of our own age, to be told that the same process must occur in the history of Senator and president of the university as in that of the degraded prostitute and the cunning wharf-rat. But it is so. Culture of the intellect has nothing to do with it. It is not an affair of the intellect, but of the spirit. Jesus rides over the "teacher" allusion in the speech of Nicodemus. It is as if He had said: It is not a new doctrine men want, but a new life; it is not a question of *doing* something but of *being* something; a foreigner might *do* all that a citizen does and yet not *be* a citizen. Perhaps Luther puts it still better, thus: "My teaching is not of *doing* or *leaving undone*, but of a *change* in the man; it is not new works done but a new man to do them; not another mode of living only, but a new birth."

5. There is an assumption in the speech of Jesus which He did not discuss, which needed no discussion, because Nicodemus felt it, and by his visit acknowledged it, namely, the absolute necessity of being in the kingdom of God. And under that is the assumption that there is a kingdom, "a government in which God is King, which, being an abstraction, we can concretely think of so far as each man is concerned only as the surrender of that man to the rule of God, the total removal of rebellion out of his heart, the destruction of the principle and spirit of rebellion from his soul, so

that he is loyal to God freely and affectionately." (See my "Light of the Nations.") To the forming of just such a body on earth Jesus devoted His life. But He made no concessions ; for

6. He announced to Nicodemus that the only way of entrance into that kingdom was by birth ; that no man could move in, no foreigner be naturalized ; but wherever a citizen of that kingdom can be found he must have been born into citizenship. Nicodemus had come to Jesus as to a teacher, expecting to be taught, schooled into the kingdom, whereas Jesus had peremptorily and dogmatically and solemnly declared, " Except a man be born from above he can not see the kingdom of God," much less can he be in it.

7. Jesus anticipated that scientific doctrine of the nineteenth century which we call *biogenesis*, that every living thing comes from some other living thing outside itself, and that there is no such thing in nature as spontaneous generation. In the case of the spiritual life there is no evolution, there is no development, there is strictly no *regeneration*, any more than when life seizes inorganic matter and produces a vegetable or an animal organism. It is a birth from above. Something has descended upon dead matter and it has flowered into a rose or leaped into a lamb. Education brings out what is in a man ; religion puts into a man that which he can never have from nature.

#### A STARTLED PHILOSOPHER.

Nicodemus felt the rebuke, coming as it did so sharply from so young and uneducated a man to one so much older and believing himself so much more learned.

His reply, "How can a man be born when he is old?" perhaps does not necessarily show that he had misunderstood Jesus, as has generally been supposed. It may mean an attempt to refute the young Prophet. It may be equivalent to saying, You know the difficulty of causing an aged body to repeat its birth; and it must be more difficult in the case of the spirit. He did not believe Jesus; perhaps that was all; and he tried to show Jesus that He was mistaken.

#### THE PROFOUND REPLY OF JESUS.

The reply which Jesus made was preceded by that solemn, "Verily, verily." He had announced the necessity of the new birth; He now states how it comes about. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter the kingdom of God." This reply to Nicodemus's *reductio ad absurdum* is the statement of a well-known principle in physiology and psychology, that that which begets imparts its nature to that which is begotten. If a man could go into his mother's womb and be *born again* he would be *born the same*, and nothing would come of the process, even if repeated a thousand times; but if the Spirit of the Almighty God make a new spiritual creation there is no longer any difficulty to be objected. There is no *regeneration*; there is a *new* generation.

"Of water and the Spirit." With the prepossessions of almost all Christians baptism is suggested by "water" in this phrase. Certainly both Nicodemus and Jesus were familiar with baptism, a ceremony by which a heathen proselyted to Judaism publicly put off his old belief and put on the new faith. But Jesus could not

have meant that, especially as applying to John's baptism, and thus made spiritual regeneration depend upon a ceremony practiced by His now superseded forerunner. Moreover, in many modern churches the rite of baptism is administered only to those who are believed to have the experience of the new birth. After all, is there any allusion to baptism? Is physical water meant? If so, why not physical "wind"? Strictly translated, the phrase is, "If any one has not been born of water and wind he can not enter the kingdom of God." Now to take these words as pointing only to material "water" and material "wind" is absurd. If the long line of scholarly and devout thinkers through the Christian ages have been justified in interpreting the word "wind" to mean the Spirit of God, seeing that Jesus was speaking of spiritual things, why should we not be justified in interpreting "water" to mean the word of God? We know from other Scripture that the new birth is produced by the voice and Spirit of God. James says (v., 18), "Of His own *will* begat us with *the word of truth*;" Peter, in his First Epistle (i., 23), "Being *born again*, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by *the word of God*." Very plainly in these words *the word* is set forth as the instrument of salvation, as it is also in our Lord's great prayer: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; *Thy word* is truth" (John xvii., 17). Here plainly it is the word and the Spirit; so when the formula is "the water and the Spirit," then we may suppose it possible that "the water" stands for "the word," and this is rendered probable by the passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians (v., 25, 26): "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it; that He might

sanctify and cleanse it with *the washing of the water in the word.*"

When a man believes in Christ a new life is born within him. It is not the old life improved. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."



V.

The Samaritan Convent.

## JOHN IV.

(5) *So He cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph : (6) and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. (7) There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water : Jesus saith unto her, " Give Me to drink." (8) For His disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. (9) The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto Him, " How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a Samaritan woman ? " (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) (10) Jesus answered and said unto her, " If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink ; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." (11) The woman saith unto Him, " Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep ; from whence then hast Thou that living water ? (12) Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle ? " (13) Jesus answered and said unto her, " Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again : (14) but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." (15) The woman saith unto Him, " Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw." (16) Jesus saith unto her, " Go, call thy husband, and come hither." (17) The woman answered and said unto Him, " I have no husband." Jesus saith unto her, " Thou saidst well, I have no husband : (18) for thou hast had five husbands ; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband ; this hast thou said truly." (19) The woman saith unto Him, " Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. (20) Our fathers worshiped in this mountain ; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (21) Jesus saith unto her, " Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. (22) Ye worship that which ye know not : we worship that which we know : for salvation is from the Jews. (23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth : for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. (24) God is spirit : and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (25) The woman saith unto Him, " I know that Messiah cometh (which is called Christ) : when He is come, He will declare unto us all things." (26) Jesus saith unto her, " I that speak unto thee am He."*

## THE SAMARITAN CONVERT.

### FLYING FROM POPULARITY.

JESUS made a flight from popularity. John's testimony and His own character and teaching had won Him a great following. Early popularity is sometimes injurious to a great life scheme. It threatened to be so in His case. So Jesus fled again to Galilee. There were two routes: the one circuitous to the east of the Jordan, the other direct, leading through Samaria. He chose the latter.

### JEWS AND SAMARITANS.

There is no literature in which the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans is not proverbial. It arose in this way: In the eighth century before Christ the tribes of Israel had been carried away captive by Shalmanezzer to Assyria. This left their town and region waste, and they remained so until another Assyrian king brought men from different places in Mesopotamia and planted them in the land. This was probably more than a hundred years after the captivity had begun. Perhaps it was Esarhaddon, as the Samaritan legend claimed. On his invasion of Judah, B.C. 677, he may have seen the beauty of this waste country and determined to repopulate it. This un-Jewish population were not descendants of Jacob, as some of them subsequently claimed. They had a mixed faith: they "feared Jehovah and served graven images" (2 Kings xvii.).

After Judah's return from the captivity it is very probable that some of the families intermarried with this foreign idolatrous nation. At any rate some of them desired to assist at the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, and the offer was declined. This incensed the Samaritans, who harassed the Jews for more than a hundred years, until the interference of Darius Hystaspes (519 B.C.). This did allay the bitterness for a season, but the hatred grew with the years. B.C. 409, Manasseh, a man of the sacerdotal order, having contracted an unlawful marriage with the daughter of Sanballat, the Persian satrap, was expelled therefor from Jerusalem by Nehemiah, upon which he obtained permission from Darius Nothus, the king of Persia, to erect a temple on Mount Gerizim for the Samaritans, who had afforded him an asylum. This was all that had been lacking to make the hatred between the races intense. The schismatic, heretical Samaritans did all in their power to harass the Jews, who repaid their ill-treatment with indescribable hate. Josephus says that the Samaritans would waylay the Jews on their journey to the Temple, so that many from the northern portion of the land were compelled to make a long *detour* east of the Jordan for fear of their enemies. It was so intolerable at one time as to lead to an armed conflict. Josephus also tells a horrible story of Samaritans stealthily entering the Temple after midnight and scattering dead men's bones in the cloisters.

We are told that the Jews were accustomed to communicate to their brethren in Babylon the exact time of the rising of the paschal moon, by beacon-fires began on Mount Olivet, and "flashing from hill to hill until they

were mirrored in the Euphrates." The Samaritans frequently deceived and disappointed those whose lamps were hanging on the willows over the waters of Babylon by perplexing the watchers on the mountains by a rival flame. Josephus loses no occasion to tell us of Samaritan meanness and outrage, and there is no reason to disbelieve any of his statements; and if we had a Samaritan historian we should undoubtedly hear quite as much that was quite as true and bad on the other side. We know that the Samaritan was publicly cursed in the synagogues of the Jews; that he could not appear as a witness in a Jewish court; that what he touched was considered as swine's flesh; and that no penitence or profession of faith upon his part would admit him through any door of proselytism, the Jew striving thus to cut him off from the hope of eternal salvation. "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil," was the ordinary Jewish form for expressing utter contempt of any one.

The violence of this hatred was thus expressed: "He who receives a Samaritan into his house, and entertains him, deserves to have his own children driven into exile." ("Light of the Nations," pp. 151, 152.)

#### THE WELL OF JACOB.

Very beautiful is the situation of the city of Shechem in Samaria. The mountains of Ehal and Gerizim are parallel, and between them there is a beautiful valley sloping up toward the west. When the writer of this volume saw it, it was as the sun was descending between the mountains and flooding the whole valley with a stream of light which seemed to roll over the town.

Eastward of the two mounts, a half-hour's ride from the town, is the well of Jacob, near which is Joseph's tomb.

Upon reaching this spot at midday Jesus was wearied and rested on the curb while the disciples went into the town to procure food. A Jew might not accept food as a present from a Samaritan, but he might purchase of him. Their absence was necessarily at least three quarters of an hour. It was probably longer. The disciples had probably also taken the portable little household apparatus of the company, with which would be the *antlema*, the pole to which buckets were attached to be let down into wells. Tired and thirsty, Jesus saw a woman approach. What would a woman of the city want at the well at this hour? She did not have to come from the heart of the town for water, as there were wells in Shechem. When this difficulty was presented by me to a learned man in Shechem (now *Nablous*, corrupted from Neapolis), he said that women of the town at certain seasons of the year were accustomed to hire themselves to work in the fields at the bottom of the valley, and would go provided with poles to let their pitchers into the well, which it was very natural that they should frequent at midday.

#### THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

Jesus lost no opportunity to promote the cause for which He had come into the world. Man or woman, many or few, made no difference with Him. A human spirit was of sufficient value and interest to draw forth the treasures of His grace and wisdom. As soon as the woman came near the well He opened the conversation, and it is worthy of remark that John's report of that con-

versation is longer than the account given of Christ's talks with John Baptist, or the priests, or Moses and Elias, or Nicodemus, although there were three things to disparage her in the eyes of a Jew, two in the eyes of any oriental, and one in the eyes of any man of any land and any age, as it turned out that this person was a woman, a Samaritan, and a prostitute.

It is remarkable that there should be a prejudice against woman anywhere, and especially among orientals, and more especially among Jews, since God has chosen women rather than men through whom to make His revelations to the world. To Eve He made that promise of a Saviour which kept the world in heart until Jesus came; to the Mother Mary He made the announcement of the approaching birth of the World's Deliverer, and His only mortal parent was a woman; to this woman, at Jacob's well, He made the first open declaration of the presence of the Messiah; and to the blessed saint, Mary of Magdala, He announced that Resurrection which is the corner-stone of the religion which is the world's asylum. It was natural that a Jew should hate a Samaritan. It is natural that the male sex should dislike a prostitute, as she is the product of the lust of men, and we always hate those whom we have injured. Here, then, were three prejudices to overcome, that of sex, that of nationality, and that of character and station.

#### THE METHODS OF THE CHRIST.

The methods of Jesus in bringing a soul to spiritual light and life are worthy of study. The most obvious thing in this narrative is the naturalness of Jesus. He is simply a man. There is nothing of the pedagogue or

lecturer or preacher about Him. He meets His auditor as an unofficial man would meet a wholly indifferent woman. Yet through the whole conversation His dignity impresses us as no self-conscious dignity could. His spiritual insight is surprising. His delicacy is as sweet as the greatness of such a man could make it. And His spiritual earnestness is a tonic to all students of this scene.

He opened the interview as He sat by the ledge or on the curb of the well; which was a spring well, a fact to be noticed as coloring the discourse. The woman probably had brought up water for herself, and taken a draught without paying the least attention to the traveling Jew, when Jesus simply said, "Permit Me to drink." To make a request of another is always a compliment. It was very natural to take "water" for the text of this discourse. The examination of the Scriptural uses of water would be very profitable if we had space, but we are now confined to this conversation. The request of Jesus brought out the woman's characteristics.

#### THE WOMAN'S CHARACTERISTICS.

She perceived by His accent, if not by His dress and address, that He was a Jew, but she could have had no presentiment that He was other than a common Jew. A saucy, clever, susceptible character was hers, with something of what the French call *naïveté*. She had had much intercourse with men, in which she had learned how to parry and thrust in the fencing which generally takes place in preliminary conversation.

"How is this?" said she with a light sneer. "Oh, so! a Jew, when he is warm and tired and thirsty from his



journey, can beg at least a drink of water of a Samaritan woman !” And she seemed to triumph over the humiliation of her natural enemy, and to postpone His request capriciously until He explained His unusual conduct.

A Converter of Men must not play at games of jest and sarcasm. Jesus addressed Himself directly to His work. “If you had known the bounty of God and who it is that says, ‘Permit Me to drink,’ *you* would have made request of *Him* and He would have given you living water.” It seems a gentle reproof at her withholding what God so bountifully gives to all men. It seems to imply that if she had spiritual insight *she* would have been the asker, and He would have given her a most valuable spiritual gift typified by the water of the well. His spirit is intent upon imparting a spiritual gift to His hearer, so intent that, thirsty as He was, He lets the pitcher of water sit by the well while He pushes the conversation which so engages Him.

Jesus, the Christ, is the gift of God ; life is the gift of Jesus Christ : that is what He is urgent in teaching.

The tone and manner and air of the Teacher must have aroused the curiosity of this excitable woman. Then he was not a common Jew ! Then he was not a mere traveling Rabbi ! “Who is he ?” That phrase probably thrilled her. “Speaking to thee.” That must mean that he has something more to be addressed especially to her. Who is this man, and what can he mean ? She began to feel the power of his presence. He was becoming too profound and drawing too near to her inmost being. She will do what all sinners do when the convicting Spirit of God arouses their consciences. She will ward off the thrusts.

## BECOMING INTERESTED.

She had begun with, "Thou Jew"; now she calls him by the dignified "Sir." But it was not in her nature to follow up this respectful word with such as, "You speak the truth; I am a very ignorant woman; you seem to be a wise man; teach me." No, she was not spiritually developed to that height. She could go no further than her light. She could not have thought of a better water, got by prayer, without visible instrument. She doubted the ability of the speaker to make good his words. Did he mean that the living water was the running stream which came up from the hidden springs to fill the well? Why, he did not have the means of reaching even the water that already lay in the bed of the well: how could he penetrate to the springs below? But did he suppose that this was a mere tank or cistern, and that he could bring water from some better well? Then why did he not relieve his own wants and not beg of her? And how dare this stranger disparage Jacob's well? So she replies with warmth, "Sir, you have neither bucket nor well-rope: and this well is deep; and you must go at least to the bottom to get live water! What do you mean then by living water? Or are you greater than our father Jacob? It was no less a person than Jacob who gave us this well; and he consecrated it forever by drinking of it and giving it to his children." We can fancy how she gazed with light scorn at the travel-stained stranger who seemed to be professing to be greater than the great Patriarch.

This was an attempt to bring the discourse down to an ordinary level, from the spiritual to the natural, from the heavenly to the earthly father, from Jehovah to Jacob. It was seeking refuge in the prejudice of antiquity. Those who do so, forget that there is nothing old which was not once new. But this is the ordinary recourse of unspiritual men when pressed by high spiritual considerations. Claims resting on antiquity are often fallacious. If there be a line reaching down the ages perhaps I am not in it. If Jacob did give this well to his children perhaps I am not one of his descendants, as, in point of fact, this woman most probably was not. The nearest approach she could have made to it was that of being a descendant of a half-breed, the child of some Israelite who had married into one of the families which had been brought into Samaria by Asnapper.

#### THIRST.

Very patient and wise is Jesus. He will not enter into the discussion of personal comparisons. Thirst is the world's affliction. Absence of physical moisture from a man's body for a day or two brings indescribable distress, and if continued long will cause death. Every human desire is likened to that bodily thirst: the thirst for pleasure, the thirst for power, the thirst for gold, even the thirst for knowledge. Whatever can slake these or any one of them is a most desirable thing. But they return so soon again! How continuously human experience verifies the saying of Jesus: "Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Jacob had drunk of that well; so had his sons; so had generation

after generation ; so had this woman. But they had all "thirsted again." So had the men who had endeavored at the cisterns of this world, its markets, its schools, its societies, to slake the thirst of the spirit.

"But whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall not be forever thirsting," added the Teacher. And He adds immediately what explains that saying by the words, "The water that I shall give him shall be *in him*, a fount of water springing up unto the life of eternity." For the relief of all thirsts men have been compelled to go outside of themselves, and the effort was wearing and the relief was temporary, and the old thirst came back with perhaps greater violence. This woman had experienced that in her seeking for carnal satisfaction. So has every slave to the gambling or the drink propensity. No remorse, no resolution, no exercise of the will power has ever been able to cure any man or woman of licentiousness or kleptomania or dipsomania; no one has ever been cured who has not had within himself the spring of which Jesus spoke to this poor woman. No occasional applications to external agencies have been effective. The spring of water must be within. It must be carried in the man ; then there will be no going to wells. In the world of morals men ordinarily go to tanks or cisterns in which some one has put water which, however "living" when first drawn, is now stagnant. To change the figure, all attempts at the spiritual life without having the spring inside of us will be like galvanizing a corpse : some motion like that which comes from life may be produced, but not life itself ; that must operate from within.

## UNCERTAIN SIGHT.

These lessons come to us, as at this distance we study the words of Jesus, but surely they could scarcely have been manifest to this woman. It is a little difficult to interpret her reply. Did the talk of Jesus sound to her like the dreamings of a mystic? Did it make her feel more than ever a great want of her nature? Her character was not an entirely simple one. What did she mean by saying, "Sir, give me this water, that I never thirst nor come here to draw"? It would seem that she could not rise to any height which lifted her above estimating any thing other than as it ministered to her bodily satisfaction. The intimation of the existence of something else puzzled, perplexed, and disturbed her; and she did what thousands do in this day, when the realities of the spiritual world are brought down to confound the frivolities of their inconsequential and sinful lives. She gave frivolous treatment to a great, grave subject, just as they joke about religion. Some hold may have been laid upon her spiritual nature, but her reply seems to be a banter: "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not." If she had been entirely sincere and had comprehended what Jesus said, she would not have added, "nor come hither to draw." That seems to turn the whole subject into a joke.

How often that same spirit is in the prayers of even the disciples of the Lord, in my prayers and yours! It is the spirit which seeks only for such gifts of God as set us free from temporal cares, as make it unnecessary to toil toward the well in the noonday sun. If the woman had cried: "Give me this water, even if it wash

away that which is very dear to me, even if it make life more toilsome, only so that the thirst of my spirit be slaked forever," there would have been no need for the next and painful movement of Jesus. But the painful movement was made necessary by her words and manner. God will have no trifling with sin. He brings the banterer to his senses when He makes him see that his secret sins are set in the light of God's countenance.

#### FOUR ESSENTIALS FOR SOUL SAVING.

But notice four characteristics of the dealing of Jesus with this sinful woman. And let all who are striving to convert sinners from the error of their ways study the *wisdom*, the *delicacy*, the *fidelity*, the *kindness* of the Great Master.

"Go call thy husband and come hither." That any one who has read the *Evangel*y should think that this was said because Jesus thought it indecorous to continue conversation with the woman alone, or that He did not think that a woman was a proper recipient of the great truths of the Gospel, seems inconceivable, and yet both suggestions have been made by learned men.

The Lord knew she had no husband. His request has been well considered a concealed question. He wished to call her sins to her mind. Plainly, lying was not among those sins. "Husband I have none," said the poor woman, surprised and abashed by the sudden words of Jesus. We can see her standing in her confusion before her interlocutor.

That the insight of Jesus was not simply spiritual, but was also divine, appears in His next words, which were as kind and tender as they could be under the circum-

stances: "Thou hast well said—it is good to go as far as thou hast in saying that thou hast no *husband*; in that thou didst well to speak the literal truth." In verse 18 it is unfortunate that the word is translated "truly," for that was not the fact, and in the original it is the noun, not the adverb. The Master had just quoted the word "husband" from the speech of the woman, and added "in that"—in that one particular—she had told the truth, and He complimented her for that much; but, very naturally, she had sought to conceal the disparaging facts of her life; these He recalled to her. "Thou *hast* had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is thy man, but not thy husband." Here was a great light let in on all her dark past. "Five!" The precise number. She had had five. Marriage was loose among the Samaritans. Perhaps some of the husbands had died; perhaps her behavior had driven off the others. Her present paramour, perhaps, had been willing to have easy intercourse with her, but knew her and her history too well to bind himself by marriage vows. "Thou *now* hast"; former wrongs continued in the present sin.

#### THE DISCERNER OF HEARTS.

However that may have been, the answer of Jesus showed the woman that He was a discerner of hearts. She admitted that He was a prophet; but with the perversity which in all ages has marked human nature in regard to spiritual things, instead of submitting humbly and promptly to the instruction of the new Teacher she strives to draw Him and herself away from the consideration of her own personal sinfulness and its cure, and she

does this by dexterously endeavoring to turn their talk to topics of theologic dispute and ritualistic observance. This seems to appear upon the face of the story. But may there not have begun to spring up in the poor woman's heart a hope that the Prophet, who had shown her her sinfulness, would show her the way to salvation? Let us take this gentler suggestion. Then she would be confronted by the opposing claims of the two churches, represented by Jesus and herself. She speaks of the difference between Gerizim and Jerusalem. It reveals her conflict. "Must I leave the mount of my fathers and go to Jerusalem for salvation?" That seems to have been her question.

#### THE WIDENESS OF THE GOSPEL.

Then Jesus revealed to her the great wideness of the Gospel truth.

1. As to the *place*: it was to be everywhere, "not only in this mountain," "not only at Jerusalem."

2. As to the *object* of worship: it was not to be "our father Jacob," or any one else below The Father, the Eternal Father of all men.

3. As to the *motive*: it would not be that of one searching after the inscrutable, but that of finite seekers after an infinite Seeker who was seeking them.

4. As to the *character*: it was to be spiritual, since "God is spirit" (not *a* spirit), and could be satisfied with nothing that was merely formal or false. This grand presentation of truth (1) set her free from all ecclesiastical embarrassments, and (2) brought her directly to the personal Head of the universe as to her loving Father, and (3) made her feel that that heavenly Father was



more anxious to save her, the poor Samaritan prostitute, than she was to be saved, and (4) taught her that the seat of all true religion is *in* the spirit, that all true religious culture is *of* the spirit, and that all real and permanent religious results are *for* the spirit.

The whole failure of the Samaritan religion, and of all others before His day, lay in a failure to apprehend those four fundamentals of Christ's Gospel. All religious defections since His day have been along the lines of (1) ecclesiasticism, (2) sectarianism, (3) bigotry, and (4) ritualism. His was true liberality. But true liberality never burns down the house that it may enjoy the open air. He stood for the truth of the past and the present while announcing the growing and glowing future. "Salvation (was) of the Jews."

How earnest the Prophet was! From the stately, intellectual, authoritative "Verily, verily I say unto you," He drops to the hearty "Believe Me." His soul draws near the soul He is saving. He kindles. "The hour is coming!" He exclaims as He looks toward the eastern hills to see a new day dawn on the Syrian noon in which they were talking. And He seems to see it, and cries out, "It now is." The day which ushers in a religion that does not depend upon church or sect or narrow creed or rigid rites has dawned, has leaped the orient horizon and is to break upon the world—a religion which can embrace at the same moment an immaculate Jesus and a Samaritan prostitute!

It was overwhelming. It was both sweet and grand to her. The woman believed in a coming "Messias, who is called Christ." She believed that when the Christ should come He would tell all that was necessary

for salvation. Perhaps it is worth while to notice that the word used by the woman for "tell" is that which is the root of the word "gospel." The Coming Christ will give us all the Gospel, her words imply. Perhaps they were accompanied by a look into the eyes of Christ which meant, "Perhaps Thou, who hast searched and hast told me such wondrous things, art the Messiah?" The words, the look, were too much for Him. His whole spirit was intent on saving the woman, and He took no counsel of prudence, but then and there, at Sychar, Drunkards' Town, and to this sin-soiled woman He opened his heart and acknowledged Himself Jehovah's Christ! And, greater than if a world had been made, a soul was saved! The mighty spirit of Jesus was refreshed. When His disciples drew near and urged Him to eat, He said: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The Saviour forgot His bread, the saved forgot her water-pot. There was joy at Jacob's well and joy at the throne of God.

Like every true convert the woman became an immediate missionary. She went to the men in the city who knew what she had been. She might have excused herself and felt that they would not believe a harlot; but she did her simple duty. She frankly bore her testimony. She extended the invitation. It was the same which Jesus had given to the disciples of the Baptist. The argument was in the real transformation of character. The man who could change such a woman was worth seeing. And they went and saw and heard, and kept Him two days. Some simply gave intellectual assent to the Messiahship of Jesus on the testimony of the

woman to His miraculous insight. Others entered into her very experience for themselves and could testify that they *knew* that this was truly God's Anointed Saviour of the world; for whoso could save the Samaritan of Drunkards' Town could save the world.

“For no men or women that live to-day,  
Be they as good or as bad as they may,  
Ever would dare to leave  
In faintest pencil or blackest ink  
All that they truly and really think,  
What they have said  
And what they have done,  
What they have lived and what they have felt,  
Under the stars  
Or under the sun.”

VI.

**The Great Claim of Jesus.**

## JOHN V.

(17) *Jesus answered them, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work."* (18) *For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only brake the Sabbath, but also called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.* (19) *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing outside of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing : for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also is doing, in like manner.* (20) *For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth : and greater works than these will He show Him, that ye may marvel.* (21) *For as the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom He will.* (22) *For neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son ;* (23) *that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him.* (24) *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life.* (25) *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live.* (26) *For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself :* (27) *and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.* (28) *Marvel not at this : for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice,* (29) *and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.* (30) *I can of myself do nothing : as I hear, I judge : and my judgment is righteous ; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."*

## THE GREAT CLAIM OF JESUS.

### JESUS CHARGED WITH SABBATH-BREAKING.

WHEN a man once incurs the enmity of a sect he may expect even his beneficences to be colored by their prejudices. Jesus had aroused the dislike of the Pharisaic portion of His people by His lack of respect for their man-made ethics. This was specially observable in regard to the Sabbath law. As that law was laid down through Moses, it promoted the physical, social, and moral welfare of all the people. But by degrees there had come to be intolerable additions made to it by sects of teachers who had no divine warrants; and these additions had brought the law of God into disrepute by laying upon men burdens which they could not bear. Thus one sect taught that a man must never change the posture in which he found himself when he awoke on the Sabbath-day—a dreadful way of resting. There were many such regulations.

Now Jesus had healed a paralytic on the Sabbath-day and directed the poor beggar to take his little mat and go home. Here was a double sin. He had relieved suffering on the Sabbath. He had directed a man to carry his bed on the Sabbath. Therefore they persecuted Him. Perhaps they added a trial before some neighboring inferior council, of which there were many in the country in that day. It is certainly better to come to trial before one public tribunal than to have one's case

traversed by hundreds of private irresponsible courts. Mark, they did not seek to kill the man who carried his bed to his home, but they did seek to kill the good Healer.

It is a lesson of warning against making laws for the government of others without the divine sanction. This case is another illustration of how much more zealous ritualists are for the ecclesiastical directory than the moral law.

### THE CHRIST'S DEFENSE.

The charge was that Jesus was *accustomed* to do "these things" on the Sabbath. The defense of Jesus was no denial of the facts in the specification, but a flat denial of the inference in the indictment, namely, that thereby He was violating the Sabbath. The remarkable retort was that to charge Him with violating the Sabbath was to charge God with that sin. God, Jehovah, who had given Sabbath-law, having written it in all the fibers of every human being and of every other animal, and in the very soil from which all things sprung, had always been at work of sustenance and recuperation. There never had been a Sabbath-day since Sinai, never since the creation, in which He had not been at work sustaining and propagating the animal and the vegetable life, and working all the forces of the universe; and He was the Father of the Accused. He put it in this shape: "My Father is at work until now, and I am at work." And there must have been something in the tones and looks of Jesus which made it quite apparent that He claimed a relationship with Almighty God which was quite singular, and apart from that which any other man claims



when he says "Our Father." It was a claim to be "equal with God."

His hearers so understood it. As a new indictment they charged that He was making Himself equal with God. He understood the charge. *Did He deny it?* Never. He accepted it. He deliberately took the position it assigned Him with His contemporaries and with posterity, namely, that of being a crazy man, or a bad man, or God. If not God, He was either very wicked or intellectually insane. If His claim to be equal with God be denied, the world would be forced to determine whether he was intellectually or morally insane; for Jesus certainly believed that He was God. Against His being wicked must forever stand the sanctity of His immaculate personality, which, after passing without even a "fault," as Pilate declared, through the ordeal of ecclesiastical and civil courts, all hostile, has gone out to humanity and stood for eighteen centuries as that of the loftiest and holiest human being, having the best heart that ever beat in a man's bosom, and having led the most beautifully beneficent and most sacredly self-sacrificing life ever known to our humanity. Insane? The man who in the nineteenth century would suggest that in regard to Jesus, the King of Thought, would thereby bring upon himself the suspicion of insanity.

#### HIS AUGUST CLAIM.

Jesus simply amplified the expression of His august claim.

This is a subject upon which there is no place for dogmatism. We can be little helped by processes of reasoning. We must place ourselves in the posture of

devout attention and strive to apprehend what no finite mind can comprehend.

First of all, there is the existence of fatherhood and sonhood in the one God. That we can not comprehend. But it is no more difficult of comprehension than the existence of the same relation among men, nor indeed that relation of vitality with material substances by which organism came into existence. We are not called upon to *comprehend* these revelations, but to *accept* them on apprehension. There is "the Father"; there is "the Son"; and Jesus is "the Son"; and of ourselves we never could have discovered any of this, for it is altogether a revelation.

Embracing the Sabbath question, with every thing else involved in ethics, Jesus defended Himself against His accusers by the solemn "Verily, verily" assertion that it was impossible that He should do any thing outside of Himself. "The Son can do nothing of *Himself*," away from Himself, outside His own nature. As His nature produced the revelation of the Sabbath-law it is absurd to suppose that He ever *could* violate the Sabbath. In an autocracy "the king can do no wrong." His will is law. The fact that the man had been healed by the Author of the Sabbath-law forbade that action to be laid at His door as an allegation of immorality. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but *what He seeth the Father do*." This is a claim upon the part of Jesus that His acts were the acts of the Father. When He did any thing and saw it done, so intimate is the union between the Father and the Son, that He recognized it as the Father's doing. For instance, when He saw the paralytic arise and take up his bed and walk,

after nearly fourscore years of helplessness, He regarded that as a product of an act of God the Father.

To make the union appear more clearly one of entire equality between the Father and the Son, Jesus adds : "For whatsoever thing He doeth these *also* doeth the Son *likewise*." That is to say, (1) the Son never does any thing without the Father, so that the acts of Jesus are the acts of Jehovah, and (2) the Father never does any thing without the Son, so that the acts of Jehovah are the acts of Jesus. Elsewhere in the Christain Scriptures it is revealed *specifically* that the Father created the worlds by the Son, and that the Son is the sustainer of the universe. (Read Col. i., 14-17.) What other expression in language could be devised to set forth the idea that Jesus is "very God of very God"? But the final and wonderful touch is given in the statement, the Father *loveth* the Son. Why should that be stated? It lifts this divine union out of the category of things that are united without volition of their own, as warmth and electricity and actinic force in a ray of sunlight, and shows that it is voluntary, emotional, mutually gratifying, an inseparable oneness which involves and evolves a perpetual lovingness.

#### SUBLIME VIEWS OF THE GODHEAD.

There are no views of the Godhead so sublimely uttered anywhere else in literature as these of Jesus. He first assumes the fatherhood of the Deity. God is father. It is of His essence. He does not become a father by creating, but creates because He is a father. The human relationship between the begotter and the be-

gotten furnishes us with the idea, but it has always subsisted in God. Unbeginning fatherhood implies unbeginning sonhood. In point of fact, is there such a son? Jesus not only declares that there now is, and consequently always has eternally been, but that He himself is that very Son, not a son as any other man may claim to be, but *the* Son of God. If the unbegun Son, the always-existent Son, then He does make Himself equal with the Father, as there can not be two Gods. The long-inculcated monotheism of the Hebrews made it impossible for them to conceive two persons in one God, and it is probably a metaphysical impracticability for any mind in which the idea of God is that of an infinite or even of a supreme Existence to conceive two Gods. If, then, Jesus claims to be the Only-Begotten, being one with the Father, the Father and the Son, neither having had precedent or subsequent existence either of the other, then He stands before all the laws of human thought the equal of God, and consequently the very God. Jesus states His claim to two prerogatives of the Most High God.

#### THE POWER OVER LIFE.

1. The power over life is in His hands. He vivifies and revivifies. He creates life and He raises the dead. He had first healed a life-long paralytic. The enemies of Jesus were so spiritually stupefied by the incrustation of formalism and ritualism wherein they were wrapped that the fact that this was done on the Sabbath-day obscured the splendor of the power and beneficence which it involved. But that was a divine act and fell into a subsection of His general divine power to do with life

all that can be conceived capable of being done with life.

He claimed first that power which they and their fathers understood to be the prerogative of Jehovah alone, the power to impart life. (See Deut. xxxii., 39; 1 James ii., 6; 2 Kings v., 7.) All life is originally in God. If we find that slightest sign of it in the lowest animal or in the smallest plant, we know that it flowed out of God the Father; and we also now learn that it was produced by a motion of the Son. The very order in which Jesus puts the words corresponds scientifically with the facts of creation. He does not say that the Father first quickeneth and then raiseth up, but just the reverse. An ordinary man would have thought of quickening before raising up, if he were talking of the creation. Especially would that have been true of men in the time of Jesus. But He speaks with an accuracy which would be expected of an accomplished and acute scientist of the nineteenth century. His words, "The Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth," in the material world is equivalent to "God lifts up the inorganic to be the organic, by the divine impartation of life." This is what was done at creation. It is impossible to conceive of any lifeless body taking on life, for the ability to "take on" any thing implies the possession of life by that which takes on. No; the inorganic would have remained forever inorganic, and there never could possibly have been any fish in the sea, any bird in the air, any animal on the planet, without the direct and intentional act of some Being already (1) having life and (2) the power of imparting life. Now, what occurs in the physical world oc-

curs also in the spiritual. Creation has its counterpart in recreation, generation in regeneration. "Dead in trespasses and sin" are we all. And so "dead" will we remain spiritually forever, if there come no power of new generation from without, as Jesus taught Nicodemus. But "God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Jesus claimed that that God power of life-giving resided in Himself. "Even so (thus also) the Son quickeneth whom He will." He is pressing His claim of equality with Jehovah. He is insisting that all those characteristics which made Jehovah in the mind of the Jews to be the only, one-ly, God of heaven and earth, were characteristics of Himself, the Son. Life resided in the will of the Father; life resided in the will of the Son. There could not be antagonism, nor even diversity, of will, for there is one God. There seems also an intimation of divine reservation of this stupendous power. No one else can have this power. The power of imparting spiritual life belongs alone to Him who has the power to impart animal life. No man or body of men can do either. Both are reserved to Jesus. But while the phrase narrows the power to Jesus, it enlarges the field to the limits of His divine will. "Whom He will." Academies, States, churches may exclude, expatriate, anathematize whom they will, but those same persons so denounced of men may have in them the blessed activity of a divine intellectual and spiritual life, because they are of those included in the Christ's "whom I will."

## THE POWER OF JUDGMENT.

2. The opening phrase of verse 22 does not come out in our English version. In the Greek "is implied that the Father does not of Himself, by His own proper act, vivify any, but commits all quickening power to the Son; so it is with the judgment." (Dean Alford's Greek Text.) The second claim of Jesus, then, is that He is the divine Judge of the world. Not apart from the Father, but with the Father. Through the whole discourse He makes His equality with the Father distinctly to involute the equality of the Father with the Son, by setting forth the august fact that neither ever does any thing "of Himself," *outside* of Himself or *without* the other, thus involving and intensifying all that enters into the human concept of equality.

"*All judgment* unto the Son." We must expand our usual conception of judgment from the narrower although exceedingly important idea of an assize in which responsible individuals will be examined as to their conduct and rewarded or condemned according to its character, to all possibly conceivable exercises of the judgment, not only in respect to ethical questions but also in regard to every other movement of the intellect in which can be involved the judgment which follows comparison and precedes volition. The phrase is thoroughly exhaustive. "All judgment" means every decision which follows discrimination. It is the determination of which is "the fittest" among all existing things. It is the determination of what would be the fittest among conceivable things not yet brought into existence. All *that* is given to the Son.

This is the immense claim of Jesus. As He made the worlds, as He is the Author of the cosmos, He must have been able to judge unerringly and in advance whether matter should come into existence, and if so, what portion of substance should become material, what forms that material should assume, and what relations those forms of matter should sustain to one another; also whether there should be any forces, and if so, what those forces should be, and what relation each force should sustain to every other force, and what relation any force should sustain to matter, and what should be the character and extent of all action, reaction, and interaction. This judgment Jesus claimed to have always had.

#### THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S CLAIMS.

The claim of Jesus extended to the ethical and spiritual spheres of existence. Not only is any matter or any force just what the Son thinks it is, but every act is just what the Father thinks it is, and every man is just what the Son thinks he is, for the Son thinks what the Father thinks, and the Father thinks what the Son thinks, neither thinking or judging outside of Himself or apart from the other.

More than that, the Father has given the Son authority to *execute* judgment. As the Son has "life in Himself," precisely as the Father has life in Himself—that is, is so totally self-existing that He can claim to be *the I AM* even as the Father does, so He possesses not only the ability to decide what is right and so to pronounce sentence, but He has also the authority to execute sentence.

Now all this seems to be set forth to follow up and



sustain the phrase "whom He will." The statement that "the Son quickeneth whom He will" might suggest the claim to the exercise of arbitrary and whimsical power. But God is God. He can not do wrong. Whatever He wills in heaven above or in the earth beneath must be a volition which He can execute and which is founded upon a judgment. Because that judgment is both perfect in intention and infinite in extension, there can be no mistake.

We can not comprehend this dual-unity producing a divine lone existence any more than we can comprehend the production of the soul by the union of spirit and matter, or how spirit and matter can be united in any way. We must accept it as a revelation. We must rest on the mediatorial government and the mediatorial salvation, the Father governing through the Son and the Father saving through the Son, and neither thinking, judging, or acting without the other. It is a sublime revelation, lifting us among the heights of the infinite and plunging us into the depths of the infinite, where we should perish if not upheld by the hand of the Infinite One. But (vs. 20) the Father loveth the Son, and the Son is our kinsman after the flesh as He is the Father's kinsman after the spirit. The Son loves us as the Father loves Him, and as the Son and the Father are one in judgment, one in sentiment, one in volition, and one in action, we have a secure spiritual estate.

One word, the last word in this passage is the consummate crown of it all, and so lets us into the heart of God as all the rest had let us into the mind of God, that it ought to secure our perfect homage and devotion to Jesus. If there had been a change of one word it

would have altered all our conceptions of our relations to the Almighty God. The Father "hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of"—(God? No; but because He is the Son of)—  
"Man!"

#### THE REPEATED "VERILY."

The first "Verily, verily, I say" solemnly introduces the announcement of Christ's claim to essential self-existence and the power of giving life. The third "Verily, verily" solemnly opens the announcement of His function as the Judge of all things, and so of all mankind. The intermediate "Verily, verily" announces the basis of the judgment and the method of the life in which any and every man's salvation is involved. "He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life." What does that mean? His word is His Gospel. If any man so hears His voice as to be drawn to the Father, that man has the life of eternity. Perhaps this means something more than life measured by duration, because that must pass away at the close of time, and *time* will be no more when the chronometer of the stellar system shall drop into decay. Perhaps it means—must it not mean?—such a life, such a spiritual life, as can exist in all the plenitude of its power in a sphere which is beyond the conditions of time and space. He hath it *now*. He is virtually in eternity. He shall not be condemned. He shall not be thrown into wastage, as all things were which were not selected by the Son's judgment for incorporation into the physical universe.

He has passed from death into life. He that does not believe in God the Father because of God the Son can not be incorporated into the spiritual cosmos, but is thrown into the spiritual wastage of the universe and so is lost.

Why does Jesus make this revelation? Does He derogate from the Father? No. All honor that is paid the Father is paid the Son, and equally all honor paid the Son is homage to the Father. He made this revelation, as He himself tells us (vs. 23), "that all men should honor the Son even *as* they honor the Father; he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him."

Two things follow:

1. He who worships Jesus Christ the Son as God thereby worships the Father as God.
2. He who puts any dishonor upon Jesus Christ the Son thereby blasphemes God the Father.

In that passage, Psalm xlii., 8, where the Psalmist saith, "My prayer shall be to the God of my life," in the Hebrew it is plural: to the God of my lives. And you know a man (and more may be said in this kind concerning a holy man, a saint) lives several sorts of lives, as he lives a vegetative life first, the life of a plant; and then the sensitive life, the life of an animal; and then the rational life, the life of a man; and then, if he be a saint, as you know the Psalmist was, a holy life. Now all these lives are comprehended together in this one Fountain. "My prayer shall be to the God of my lives." It is He that makes me live all these several ways that I do live. As I live the life of a plant, I have it from Him; as I live the life of an animal, I partake that life from Him; as I live the life of a man, a rational creature, I shall partake that life from Him; and as I live the life of a saint, a holy man, I partake that life from Him, too, which carries the nearest resemblance with it of its own life.—Howe.

VII.

**The Miraculous Feeding.**

## JOHN VI.

(1) *After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. (2) And a great multitude followed Him, because they beheld the signs which He did on them that were sick. (3) And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. (4) Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. (5) Jesus therefore lifting up His eyes, and seeing that a great multitude cometh unto Him, saith unto Philip, "Whence are we to buy loaves, that these may eat?" (6) And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do. (7) Philip answered him, "Two hundred pennyworth of loaves is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little." (8) One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, (9) "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?" (10) Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. (11) Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to them that were set down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would. (12) And when they were filled, He saith unto His disciples, "Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost." (13) So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten. (14) When therefore the people saw the sign which He did, they said, "This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world."*

## THE MIRACULOUS FEEDING.

### TRYING TIMES.

**B**ETWEEN the second and third years of His ministry, on His third tour of Galilee, two things combined which led to the circumstances amid which Jesus performed the miracle of feeding five thousand people. Jesus had begun this tour not only by preaching extensively and healing the people, but also by sending forth the twelve men whom He had chosen to be His apostles on a missionary tour of preaching His Gospel and performing acts of healing. This had rapidly increased His fame, and had intensified the interest of the people in His ministry. This movement was a great advance upon all He had done on the line of Messianic claim and work.

Another event conspired with this to have a great effect upon the movements of Jesus. The fearless preacher of the Jordan had aroused against himself the hatred of Herodias, the bad woman who was living in adultery with her brother-in-law Herod. This lustful ruler had so little spiritual insight as not to perceive that a murder is a worse thing than the violation of a vicious vow made to a wicked woman. The daughter of Herodias had danced before him, and so charmed him that he had vowed to grant her request, to the giving of the half of his kingdom. At the instigation of her bad mother she had requested the head of John the Baptist,

and Herod had granted it. The headless body of the grand preacher had been buried by his disciples, and the melancholy news was carried by the disciples of Jesus as they were returning to their Master.

It was a very bitter and trying time for all parties. The horror of the decapitation of John Baptist and the excitement of their missionary tour and its report to Jesus had so worn down the little band that Jesus saw how needful it was that they should have a season of repose. The slaughter of John, and His own growing popularity, and the excitement of the people on both accounts, might have raised a sedition. Herod knew how Jesus was gaining in power, and the tyrant was beginning to calculate the political effect thereof. All things conspired to make a brief retreat desirable. The entire absence of any sign of fanaticism is to be noticed in every thing which Jesus did. "Come ye *yourselves* apart into a desert place and rest awhile," is the direction which the evangelist Mark reports; and this implies that, after being so much with the people, they needed the strengthening quiet of solitude. No one can keep his intellectual and spiritual tone healthy who is always under the public eye.

#### AN ATTEMPTED RETREAT.

So the party took ship and started across perhaps the north-western corner of the lake to a spot well known to the disciples as a favorite retreat of Jesus. It was not a "desert" place in the sense of a place where no vegetation grew, but a place usually deserted because it was a mountain which lay out of the line of travel. Thither Jesus was accustomed to retire when He would engage



in a season of protracted prayer. They all knew it so well that there is no more precise description.

But Jesus "could not be hid." The enthusiastic populace who had witnessed His miracles watched His movements, for anywhere on the shore they could see the course of the boat. They immediately began to run around the head of the lake, and they went with such eager avidity that when Jesus landed He encountered a great congregation. He looked on them compassionately. They were pastorless sheep. Those who should have cared for them had forsaken them. Yet they were eager to receive instruction, stupid as were their consciences, dull as was their spiritual insight. So Jesus taught them and healed their sick, which, perhaps, had been brought in the boats that followed.

Then another attempt was made to secure retirement, but He could not be hid. The Passover was nigh. Thousands who had come from another direction on their way to Jerusalem heard that Jesus was near, and poured up the mountain to the famous Teacher.

#### AT WORK AGAIN.

The compassion of Jesus was stirred. He called the attention of the disciples to their physical needs, and then began a long discourse on the doctrines and principles of His Kingdom. Human nature will assert its needs even in a congregation sitting under the ministry of the blessed Jesus. As the day wore on, the people began to grow very hungry. Combining the four narratives in the Evangelists, it would seem that there were two suggestions in regard to the want of food: one coming from Jesus in the early part of the day, and the other

a reminder from the disciples of Jesus as the evening drew on.

However that was, at one time there was a conversation with Philip, introduced by Jesus for the purpose of testing Philip and showing him his dullness of spiritual insight. "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" He knew what He would do; but how far had Philip's faith grown? Not much. He had witnessed some miracles of Jesus. The natural reply of a faithful spirit would have been something like this: "Lord, dost Thou ask me this question as Thou didst tell the servants at Cana to fill up the pots with water?" Or, "Lord, I am not concerned: Thou art here: He that turned water into wine can change this grass to bread, or somehow spread for all this company a table in the wilderness."

But no such answer came. One of the trials of Jesus in the days of flesh was, as in this day it still is, the lack of that spiritual insight which makes faith. Philip answered: "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one of them may take a little." Two hundred *denarii* of their money would be about thirty-five dollars of ours, which would give only a little more than half a cent's worth of bread for each. That would be "a little," truly. And perhaps that was all that Treasurer Judas had at that time in the exchequer. More likely it was a sum quite as much exceeding the whole apostolic store as it fell short of the amount requisite to procure enough food for the crowd. And perhaps the form of the question of Jesus may have suggested another difficulty to Philip: "Whence?" The town was so far that it would be

several hours before any person, even amply supplied with money, could go and procure and bring the requisite amount of food. Philip's faith was not sufficient for the test.

#### THE DISCIPLES IN TROUBLE.

The day wore on. The disciples began to be apprehensive that there would be trouble, and so approached their Great Master, and suggested, as Luke tells us (ix., 12), that He should send the multitude away, so that they might scatter themselves over the surrounding country and procure food. "Give ye them to eat," said the Master. Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, having been with the Lord from the beginning, and possibly having heard the suggestion of Jesus earlier in the day and the conversation with Philip, and probably having been around the company on a sort of foraging expedition, answered: "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" The word "lad" here means "a little slave." He belonged to some family in the neighborhood—probably had been sent out to sell these provisions,—and had followed the multitude to find customers. Perhaps he had come with other food, but this was all of his stock that was left when Andrew discovered him.

Then Jesus proceeded. First He had the crowd seated in an orderly fashion in regular groups, perhaps in about one hundred companies of fifty each (Luke ix., 14), so that the disciples could serve the whole multitude without confusion. The place was grassy. When the great congregation was seated, how like a garden of

living flowers the plain must have looked from the elevated ground which there sloped up all around the grassy basin.

### JESUS BRINGS RELIEF.

Then Jesus, following the pious custom of His countrymen, gave thanks for the food which He had taken into His hands. Then He divided the food among His twelve disciples (Luke xiv., 19), and they passed down the ranks and distributed to the sitting company. How this was done we do not know. Each of the twelve might have gone, breaking from his less than half a loaf to give to the first, and then found his piece as large as it was before, or larger. Or, one of the disciples may be fancied as having given the whole piece to the nearest person, and that person dividing with his neighbor, each having more left as he gave and did eat, until each one found that as a certain mouthful finally satisfied him, behold, it was the last mouthful of the loaf.

“How this was performed we have no means of knowing. The historians write the facts, and offer no theory. There was no supply called forth from the multitude, and the disciples had none in reserve. The astonishment and enthusiasm of all parties show this. It could have been no feat of legerdemain. It has had no parallel, and no attempt has been made, so far as is known to us, to imitate it. It was no hastening of the process of nature, for it was baked bread that was multiplied. If a handful of uninjured wheat had been made to grow in an hour into the bulk of a harvest, the process would have been measurably intelligible, and might have been described as an astoundingly rapid

pushing forward of natural processes. But here were five baked loaves and two small fishes already cooked. More than five thousand persons, after a long fast, ate of these and nothing else, ate to repletion, and then the fragments were hugely more than the original bulk. It was an astounding fact, a stupendous act, and was so regarded by those who were of that large party. Whether the food grew in the hands of Jesus, or in the hands of the disciples, or in the hands or in the mouths of the eaters, there seems no possibility of knowing. The eye-witnesses do not adventure an opinion. Nor can we. It is a fact in the history of Jesus, and as such we must simply record it and honestly study it." ("The Light of the Nations," p. 389.)

Let us endeavor to gather profitable lessons from the miracle.

#### THE CHRIST'S COMPASSION: QUIET AND DIET.

1. The first thing which strikes us is the compassionateness of our Lord to men. Here there had gathered about Him a multitude of persons who belonged to an obscure corner of an obscure country. They were unknown to courts; they were unknown to schools. Not one of them probably was ever mentioned or alluded to fifty years after his death. They were as near nothing as probably any five thousand people could be. And yet the Lord had compassion upon them; they were among men what among sheep would be a flock considered so worthless that no shepherd would own them. And yet the Lord had compassion upon them.

His compassion extended to their bodies. There never was a man more "spiritually-minded" than Jesus,

and never a teacher who seemed to care more for the body as the vehicle of the spirit. This He showed throughout His career. He showed it here in calling His disciples away from labor to refreshment, and in acknowledging the effect upon the body of the exercise of the spirit. He did not believe that the service of the Heavenly Father required the destruction of the earthly child. His clear spiritual insight showed Him the true relations of the spirit and body, so that He never regarded the latter as either the tyrant or slave of the former, but rather as the instrument, the use of which the spirit could not long enjoy without the tender care which embraced proper nourishment and proper rest. He knew what sometimes it requires many years for some very intelligent men to learn, namely: that the two most important curatives are *Quiet* and *Diet*. He rested the disciples and fed the multitude, and taught His disciples to be interested in the bodies of men.

#### THE ARITHMETIC OF GOD.

2. The story of this miracle presents us the contrast between the arithmetic of man and the arithmetic of God. To human sight it was thus: one person, a lad, a slave; five cakes, small cakes, barley cakes; plus two fishes, very small fishes < 5,000 men + women + children—and *children*, ravenous little eaters! "Loaves" is a misleading word to western ears. It implies something large, whereas the loaf spoken of in the narrative was about the size of our ordinary griddle-cake or buckwheat-cake. Divide one of those into a thousand equal parts, and see if one of those parts is worth even a starving man's effort to put it in his mouth. Take a min-

now and divide it, if you can, into two thousand five hundred parts, and give one of those parts to a man and tell him that when he had made his meal of it he may give the remainder to his wife and children! That's the absurd view which the thought of such a commissary presented to the disciples. But God's arithmetic is not ours. With Him one shall chase a thousand and two shall put ten thousand to flight. Man would say, if one chase one it is a victory. Man would state the proposition thus: if, by any means, one chase a thousand, then two may put two thousand to flight; but God says *ten* thousand. Now, apply that principle to this mode of provisioning a multitude.

#### THE MAJESTIC SIMPLICITY OF THE CHRIST.

3. One is struck with the divine serenity, the majestic simplicity of Jesus. There is often such fussiness when men, even some great men, are about to do some great thing. But here is no hurry, no attempt to divert the attention of the people from the mode of the bread multiplication. Simply, through His disciples, Jesus arranges the men in groups of fifty each, so that they can be properly served, and there shall be no hurry, no scramble, no unseemly disorder. How to eliminate hurry, not haste, from these lives of ours, is a great practical problem for us; and here, in the manner of the Master, we have a very helpful object-lesson.

#### HIS SIMPLE DEVOUTNESS.

4. The pious custom of the Lord's countrymen was to give thanks to the Giver before eating the gift. The heart of Jesus was always turned toward the Father; so He expressed gratitude to Him who is the fount of every

stream of favor, while exercising His own inalienable divine prerogative of consecrating the bread He was about to multiply. Thankful for so little ! About to make it so much ! What an example to us, who have not this power of creating increase ! And does it not suggest the question whether, if we were more pious, we might not be more powerful ? If the performance of a miracle may be retarded for prayer, shall we lose any thing if, before we begin the day's trading, or the day's work, or the day's teaching, or the day's traveling, or the day's writing, or the day's preaching, we consecrate, as best we may, the coming effort by most earnest and devout address to God ?

#### THE EMPLOYMENT OF OTHERS.

5. It is a striking feature of this narrative that it represents Jesus as not doing of Himself any thing He could do by another. He employs the disciples to do what they can do, and reserves for Himself only those acts which can be performed by no one else. This has been His plan ever since He made the world. He has done for man what man could not do for himself, but never what man himself could do. He made the soil and the seed, but never made a plow, a mill, an oven, or even a loaf of bread when man could make it for himself. But in the desert He made the manna, and in this mountain He multiplied the food. But He did not throw away the five cakes and two little fishes, nor did He arrange the company for the repast, nor did He serve tables, nor did He gather up the fragments. It is a hurtful fanaticism to expect God to do for us what we can do for ourselves, but it is a rational and blessed enthusiasm to ex-



pect Him to do all needed things which lie beyond our strength.

And men at the head of any institution, bank, railroad, factory, State, family, church, may learn this lesson: Never do what you can make others do, that you may reserve your whole strength for those things which you alone can perform. That is to be like God ; that is godliness.

#### THE TOUCH OF THE LORD : AND SIMPLE OBEDIENCE.

6. What the Lord touches grows. It is blessed to receive at the hands of Jesus. The divine touch gives divine efficacy. The preachers of the Gospel of the blessed God know this. Whatever a preacher takes from Plato or Shakespeare, from philosopher or poet, he can give to his hearers, but it will be no other than that which he got ; but whoso goes direct to Jesus and takes the truth from Him and imparts it to the hearers gives what grows. It grew larger as it passed through the preacher's mind, and grows larger as it enters the hearer's mind, and still increases as the hearer tells it to another.

7. This blessing comes from simple obedience. As the disciples stood around the Teacher, after they had obeyed His directions in arranging the company, He broke the cakes and gave each not quite half of one, and bade them give these small sections to the multitude. We can imagine a doubter, like Philip or Thomas, saying to himself, if not aloud, " What's the use of this ? This is too ridiculous ! What ! feed a thousand people with less than half a barley-cake ? There is no proportion of means to end." If He had said so and stopped, the miracle would have failed, even as on another occasion

Jesus could do no mighty work because of their unbelief. Or, if the disciple had eaten that portion and not imparted of it to some one in the company, the miracle would have been limited. That is one reason why the whole world is not fed with that Bread which has come down from heaven. Men throng the church and go away and meet hundreds of people during the week and never give a portion of that portion of the truth which they had received at the hands of the disciple of the Lord. A Christian who does that is as mean and as destructive as Andrew would have been if he had received a portion from the hand of the Master and had declined or neglected to share it with one of the hungering multitude.

#### ECONOMY AND ABUNDANCE.

Let not the lesson of economy be lost. Of all people the Americans are the most wasteful. There is scarcely a family in New York which does not actually throw away enough to support an oriental household. Economy is not mean ; stinginess is. One of the troubles of the poor in this free land of plenty is the absence of economy. Now here was One who could make a loaf of bread as large as the mountain on which they stood, and who had made all the fishes in all the sea and was about to produce abundance ; what did He want with the five barley cakes and the two small fishes ? He could instantly have filled all laps with food ; but He did not fail to use the little store in hand. And then, when all were entirely satisfied, what did He want with the fragments and the crumbs ? They might have been left. But He never has wasted one atom of matter nor one volt of force.

Then, behold the *abundance*! The word translated "baskets" in our common version means pockets or wallets. The twelve baskets were probably the twelve wallets of the twelve apostles which they carried on their journeys. When all the women, all the children, and all the men had been satisfied, so greatly had the little store increased that each apostle was able to carry away with him provisions sufficient for a week. In the spiritual world the like law prevails. He who imparts any truth has more truth left than he had before. He who exerts any spiritual influence increases his store of spiritual power.

The Gospel of Jesus, like this bread of the miracle, is sufficient for the moral and spiritual wants of the whole world. What can exhaust that which finds itself growing only when it is used, and invariably multiplied by being divided?

#### THE GODLIKE CHRIST.

What a picture of a God we have in the simple narrative of this miracle! There is nothing to equal it in all Greek and Roman and oriental and modern literature. The unconscious power of this poet, John, is admirable. He does not seem to know that in these nine verses he has written what no poet of any time or any land has been able to approach. But he has. It is impossible to conceive any description of the exertion of divine omnipotence moved by divine compassion more marvelously natural and supernatural than the story of this miracle as related by John and the other disciples. The passage in Genesis describing the creation in which the command was issued, "Light be!" and immediately

“Light was !”—a passage admired from the earliest days of criticism down to our own times—is surpassed by the account in the eleventh and twelfth verses of the sixth chapter of John. In the former there is apparent exertion ; in the latter there is mere volition without so much as speech. Humanity needs no God for time and eternity superior in any characteristic to the God whose omniscience, omnipotence, and goodness shine out in the story of the miraculous feeding of five thousand men with their women and children.

Yet while so many were fed, so few were converted.

Perhaps some reader will say to himself that if he could only be eye-witness to such a scene he would yield to the sight and give homage to Jesus as the true representative of the theistic idea. No, you would not. If you have no such spiritual insight as permits you to see the Father in the Son as revealed in the Gospel, you could partake of the food which fed the five thousand, you could see the eyes of the blind flooded by streams of light, you could witness the cleansing of the leper, and even the raising of the dead, and Jesus would be to you only as “a prophet that should come into the world.” Even Philip, who heard the claim of Jesus and saw the water made wine at Cana, and was present at this miracle, and was with Jesus to the close of His career, on the last sorrowful night, the night before the crucifixion, wounded his Lord by asking to be shown the Father ! and had to be told that whoever had seen Jesus had seen the Father, that all that is visible of God can be seen in Jesus.

Therefore, do not pray for a miracle, but for increased spiritual insight.

VIII.

*The Food of Immortality.*

## JOHN VI.

(26) *Jesus answered them and said, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled. (27) Work not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you : for Him the Father, even God, hath sealed" [or, Him the Father has sealed as God]. (28) They said therefore unto Him, " What must we do, that we may work the works of God?" (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (30) They said therefore unto Him, "What, then, doest Thou for a sign, that we may see, and believe Thee? what workest Thou? (31) Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat." (32) Jesus therefore said unto them, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but My Father is giving you the true bread out of heaven. (33) For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and is giving life unto the world." (34) They said therefore unto Him, " Lord, evermore give us this bread." (35) Jesus said unto them, " I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. (36) But I said unto you, that ye have seen Me, and yet believe not. (37) All that which the Father giveth Me shall come unto Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. (39) And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all that which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. (40) For this is the will of My Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth the Son, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

## THE FOOD OF IMMORTALITY.

### THE CHRIST AGAIN DISAPPEARS.

AFTER the miraculous feeding of the great multitude the people would have made Jesus king. But this was not in His scheme. So He retired from them into some recess of the mountain, and the disciples entered their boats to go to Capernaum.

On that memorable night when they toiled in the darkness against the tempest, Jesus came walking to them on the sea and brought them to Capernaum. The people who would have made Him king had seen the departure of the disciples and the retiring of the Great Teacher. But the next morning when they could not find Jesus on the mountain and knew that He had not gone with the disciples when they started, they were naturally perplexed, and some of them took boats and went to Capernaum. Their desire to see Jesus again was unaffectedly strong. Some of them—perhaps not the best of them, perhaps the most carnal and secular of the crowd, many others perhaps having gone away carrying the seed of the kingdom in their hearts,—some of them pursued their search so far as to cross to Capernaum, where they might find news of Jesus.

They had no delicacy. They persecuted Jesus with their presence. They were not seeking spiritual help, but material comfort. “They hoped that He was to be their Bread-King, the Messiah to reign and *feed* them.

Their hearts and consciences had all gone to stomach." ("Light of the Nations," p. 394.)

These impertinent people, who were as destitute of delicate sensibility as they were of spiritual insight, immediately addressed themselves to Jesus, probably while He was teaching in the synagogue. It is to be noticed that their zeal was somewhat cooling, seeing that they now addressed Jesus merely as a teacher and not as a king, calling Him only "Rabbi." They questioned Him as to when and how He had eluded them and reached Capernaum. It was so strange a thing that probably they expected to be told of another miracle.

#### A REPROACH, AN EXHORTATION, AND A PROMISE.

But Jesus paid no attention to their question. His behavior here is godlike. God has never granted answer to any question suggested by either pruriency or curiosity. That is true through the whole body of revelation. The answers of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man are as to those things in which man's spiritual salvation is concerned. So Jesus showed them that He searched their hearts to the bottom. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me not because of the miracles you saw, but because of the loaves you did eat." This seems to charge them with really sinking the spiritual in the material by failing to reach the invisible through the things that are seen.

Jesus follows up these words of reproach with words of exhortation: "Exert yourself not so much for the bread which perisheth as for that bread which endureth to the life of eternity." That a man should not put forth proper effort to provide the needful food for himself and



family would be a teaching contrary to the whole tenor of the Christian Scriptures. St. Paul exhorts lazy people, "by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat *their own bread*." He goes further, and enjoins that those who will not work shall not eat (2 Thess. iii., 10-12). But, after all, bread and meat perish. If they are not eaten they corrupt and go into putrefaction. If eaten, much is thrown off as useless excrement, and that which supplies the needs of the body does but support, for a little while, an organism which must soon perish. There is a spiritual life which may be perpetual. As the life of the body is supported by nourishment from without, so is the life of the spirit. As there is material meat, so there is spiritual meat.

And a curious paradox seems involved in the words of the Master: the perishable meat must be wrought for laboriously, while the spiritual meat is given. And herein is the promise: "The Son of Man shall *give* you " that food.

It was a very broad promise to be made by One who, in the very making, emphasizes His manhood. That emphasis of His brotherhood points to His sympathy with humanity, but He will not allow it to point away from His divinity. He is the Son of God while He is the Son of Man. "Him (the Son of Man) hath the Father sealed." As if He had said: The God whom you regard as the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to whom you go for all things, this "Father of eternity," as Isaiah calls Him, has set His seal to My claim to be equal with Him. "Him hath the Father sealed as God," appears to be the proper translation of the close of the twenty-seventh verse. As the words

stand in our common version there is violence done to their collocation in the original. What Jesus gives God the Father gives, and the Father never gives any thing without the Son, nor the Son without the Father.

#### SOME SPIRITUAL LIGHT.

There seemed to dawn upon them the idea that Jesus was specially claiming to be a great moral teacher, and that His miracles of bread-giving and the like were merely incidental. They seemed to begin to perceive that Jesus had a spiritual meaning in the word "food," and they began to have some desire to possess that food. Therefore they asked Him, in the spirit of their time, and perhaps with the feeling that they had been fairly faithful observers of their religion, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" This did not mean the works which God performs, but the works which are pleasing to Him and are required by Him. So in their Scriptures it had been used, as in Jeremiah xlviii., 10, and so it was afterwards used in the New Testament Scriptures, as in 1 Cor. xv., 58. But their ritualistic habit comes forward in the plural of the word "works," and their Pharisaic trust to what they could "*do*" of themselves, as meriting and procuring salvation.

Jesus corrected their mistakes by the statement, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." This is as fundamental as it is explicit. He corrects "works" by "work"; He substitutes *belief* for *doing*. This statement has in it the germ of the whole Gospel system, as afterward urged by Jesus Christ himself and presented by James, the

brother of Jesus, and elaborated by Paul. There is just one thing necessary, namely: belief *in* Jesus Christ as the One to whom the spirit must be confided for time and eternity. This does not mean a mere assent of the intellect to the historic Christ, which may be in the most wicked men and devils, but a living and loving and powerful faith, which transforms the believer's character and produces, not dead, but living works.

#### CREDENTIALS OF MESSIAHSHIP DEMANDED.

His hearers understood Jesus as thus making the claim to Messiahship. They demanded of Him, therefore, some sign in support of that claim. They had been fed with material bread from His hand, and that was a sign that He was a prophet come from God; but for His Messiahship they demanded something more. Was it that He should produce perpetual bread or produce bread perpetually, in this new kingdom which He was setting up? They could not take in the thought of a Saviour from sin working spiritually from within: that was too refined a thought for them. They had been so trained under law, by inheritance and environment, that they had in their blood and in their spirits that idea of righteousness which makes it to consist in conforming externally to some command. Now Jesus teaches them that what God desires of them is to have such faith in Him as shall produce a new life from love, not from the rigid application of laws. And to believe God, to rest on Him, to refer every thing to Him, to do every right thing for love of Him, this is the manliest, noblest thing a rational being can do.

They did not embrace this idea; it was too large for

them. They could conceive nothing higher than a law-giver. So they demanded of Jesus some miracle which should establish His authority as a law-giver. Moses had led the people, and had delivered the law to them. His claim was established by a miracle the most stupendous known to them and their fathers. For decades of years he had fed the great multitude which had come out of Egypt with bread from heaven (Exodus xvi., 4; Psalms lxxviii., 24, and cv., 40). By the side of that "angels' food," what was the feeding of a few thousand just once, and with barley bread? Let Him take care of them for a quarter of a century at least, if He would have them believe on Him.

#### THE POWERLESSNESS OF MIRACLES.

One is arrested by this fresh exhibition of the powerlessness of miracles to work moral and spiritual improvement. Their fathers had been fed for years and years with food which they saw every day miraculously produced, with the weekly addition of the supplemental miracle of the production of double the amount on the sixth day and a suspension of the supply on the seventh, and yet every man of them had died an unbeliever in the wilderness. (See Exodus xvi.) Now Jesus had fed five thousand men, besides women and children, and there does not appear to have been a single soul brought nearer to God. And yet men are crying for miracles.

These impertinent people backed up their reference to Moses by quoting Psalm lxxviii., 24: "As it is written, He gave them bread from heaven." To their "it is written" Jesus loftily replies with His solemn and decisive "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He does not deny the

miracle of the manna, but He does deny that Moses gave it. "It was not Moses that gave you that bread, but My Father," and by implication of what He had said before it was Himself that had given their fathers food for their bodies. "He gave"—"He gives." He gave material bread for the bodies of your fathers, He now gives you the "true bread," the substantial bread, the spiritual bread, not from the air from which the manna fell, but from the eternal heavens. The word "gave" pointed to the fact that that supply ceased. "He giveth," *is giving*, points to the continuance of the supply of the spiritual bread which has lasted through the centuries and to-day is quite as abundant as ever, for "the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world."

To this statement of Jesus the people replied, "Lord, ever give us this bread." It was just such an outburst as might have been expected from such a crowd. It reminds us of the exclamation of the woman of Samaria, "Sir, give me this water." But there was probably less apprehension of the spiritual in them than in her; for, although they were so impressed that they had ascended in their speech from "Rabbi" to "Lord," yet even His high talk of something to eat kept their hearts in their stomachs.

#### WHERE IS THE BREAD OF IMMORTALITY?

Then said Jesus unto them plainly, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh unto Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Here one phrase involves the other. *Coming to* Jesus, turning from all other saviors, is incomplete without *believ-*

*ing on Jesus* as the only Saviour. In the body thirst follows the eating of the food which satisfies hunger. In the wilderness, after manna water was needed. "Hunger and thirst," in all times and in all languages, has been a phrase to imply intense desire. "Hungering and thirsting after righteousness" means inexpressible longing for goodness. He who reposes on Jesus has all his spiritual desires gratified and all his spiritual wants supplied, for that involves the reception of His doctrines and personality and the assimilation of both by the spirit, as bread is assimilated by the body.

And then Jesus reminds them that they had seen Him and yet had not believed. Spiritual affinity was so wanting, that even the presence of the Son of God and the sight of His miracles did not draw them unto Him. "Every thing which the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and that which cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." This is the statement of a law in the spiritual world as broad as the general statement of such a law as that of gravitation in the natural world. "Every thing that has an affinity for Me comes to Me and I have an affinity for it" is what the Great Teacher seems to mean.

#### A VERY GREAT COMFORT.

That should be a very great comfort to all who have any tendency toward the Son of God, and a great encouragement to cultivate that tendency. The general principle includes individuals as "*whatsoever*" includes "*whosoever*." Whosoever, of whatever age, or color, or sex, or nationality, or culture, or previous condition of spiritual servitude, or theological opinion, "the one com-

ing to Me" is the description of the one received by Jesus. It is the spiritual law of gravitation. The earth receives whatever comes to it : a spray of a feather of a pinion of a humming-bird, the smallest atom of matter that is free to fall to it, as well as great towers and huge mountain-slides. So let no one say I have been so frivolous and vain, I have been so worldly and carnal, I have been such an atrocious criminal that I can never be saved. The coming to Christ and believing in Christ is the only thing requisite and necessary for salvation. All other things will follow from that real, sincere, and prompt coming and trust. The whole Godhead of the Father and the whole manhood of the Son are pledged for the salvation of the man who comes and trusts.

That is confirmed and amplified in the next two verses (39, 40), which may be thus translated and paraphrased : " For I came down from heaven, not for the purpose of doing any voluntary thing which is separated from the will of Him that sent Me ; for what I am willing He is willing, and this is His will, and consequently My will, that I should not lose any thing which He hath given Me, but should raise it up at the last day." That is the universal end ; the method as to men is declared in the next sentence : " And this is the will of My Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in the Son should have perpetual life, and I should raise him up at the last day." This frees the whole spiritual government of God from the suspicion of capriciousness. Faith in Jesus Christ is the only spiritual process by which any man can secure that spiritual life which can endure all the trials and strains of all the eternities.

Here is a clear and positive announcement that ever-

lasting life, eternal life, immortal life, endless life, whatever you choose to call that mode of spiritual existence which is indispensable for existence after the last day, that that comes only from faith in Jesus Christ, and that all who have spiritual insight have life everlasting, and those who do not have and will not have spiritual insight have not and will not have everlasting life but must be lost.



IX.

**The Drink of Immortality.**

## JOHN VII.

(37) *Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. (38) He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (39) But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified. (40) Some of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, "This is of a truth the prophet." (41) Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee? (42) Hath not the Scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" (43) So there arose a division in the multitude because of Him. (44) And some of them would have taken Him; but no man laid hands on Him.*

## THE DRINK OF IMMORTALITY.

### FEAST OF TABERNACLES.\*

THE Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the autumn, when the heats were abated and the rains were not begun. The harvest had been gathered, and the Day of Atonement had just passed. In the fullness of their garner, and in the sense of freedom from the guilt of their sins, the whole people rejoiced together. Moreover, it was a joyful celebration of a sad passage in the early history of their nation, when their fathers had dwelt in booths in the wilderness, and even Jehovah's sanctuary was in a tent.

From all parts of the land, and even from many foreign parts, the devout poured into the Holy City. No good Jew allowed himself to sleep in a house. Boughs full of green leaves were brought from the country, and temporary booths constructed on house-tops and along thoroughfares, and in all the environs of the city, until Jerusalem was covered with a temporary forest. Gladness reigned, and public and private rejoicing prevailed.

The Temple service partook of the festal air of the occasion. Immediately after the regular morning sacrifices, every day, a priest went with a golden vessel to the fountain of Siloam, on the side of the hill on which the Temple stood, and drew water, which he brought through the water-gate, accompanied by a gay procession

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\* Several paragraphs in the earlier portion of this chapter have been taken from the author's "The Light of the Nations."

and the sound of trumpets, and having mixed it with wine, poured it on the sacrifice upon the altar amid the hallelujah shouts of the people. This probably reminded them of the supplies of water Jehovah had given to their fathers in the emergencies of the wilderness. The joyfulness of this ceremonial was so great that it passed into a common proverb : "He that never saw the rejoicing of drawing water never saw rejoicing in all his life."

#### THE SUPPLEMENTAL FESTIVAL.

The legal limit of the "Feast of Tabernacles" was seven days, but it was followed on the eighth day by a supplemental festival of rejoicing, especially over the ingathered crops, their corn and their wine. This was a day of special jollity, from which Jennings suggests that the heathen borrowed their saturnalia.

It was to this gayest of all festivals that the men of the nation were gathering. But over all there was a shadow. The wonderful words and works of Jesus had spread themselves through the land. The mission of the Seventy had freshly excited public attention. Every man had something to tell or to hear of what Jesus had been saying or doing. Misrepresentations and exaggerations were, of course, rife. Opinions differed. Parties were beginning to crystallize. Some were for Him, some against. The latter were more and stronger than the former, whose favorable opinion of Jesus we find much modified by the pressure of public sentiment. They said, "He is a good man," while the others said, "Nay, He deceives the people." His friends did not dare to render a frank expression of their views of His character and His operations.

## THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF JESUS.

Suddenly, in the midst of the feast, Jesus appeared in the Temple and began to teach. It was like an apparition.

What course He had come they knew not. He was not at the beginning of the feast. His absence had occasioned much anxious speculation upon the part of friends and foes. The days were going by, and He did not come. But perhaps on Wednesday, the fourth day of the feast, when expectation of His coming had begun to flag, He calmly walked into the Temple, took His position, and began to unfold His doctrine as if nothing unusual had occurred, as if His friends were not intensely anxious for His safety, and as if His foes had not been forming plots to compass His destruction. He went amply with wide knowledge, and powerfully with great authority, into His discourses. The Jews listened, and were amazed, and started the inquiry, "How does this man know letters, never having learned?" They intended to disparage Him by calling the attention of the people to the fact that He had not received Rabbinical instruction. The intention was to create popular prejudice against Him, as if He were an interloper, not being a graduate of the schools, not being in the succession of the priests.

## THE GREAT DAY OF THE FEAST.

The "Feast of the Tabernacles," strictly speaking, closed at the end of the seventh day; but on the eighth day was a supplementary festival which concluded the whole, and which was "the great day of the feast." On

the other days the priests, as we have seen, went to the fount of Siloam and drew water, which was brought with great rejoicing into the Temple. This ceremonial was omitted on the eighth day. The seven days represented the wandering, the eighth, the entrance into the land of rest, the nation's home. The water came to represent in symbol the Holy Thirst of God. It had been always a fact to notice that there was no fountain within the Temple limits on Mount Moriah. This was interpreted to signify that the refreshing spirit was lacking in their dry ecclesiasticism, and the gift of that spirit, like the opening of a fountain, was among the most precious promises of prophecy. Joel (iii., 18) foretold that it should come forth from the House of the Lord, and Ezekiel (xlvi.) describes its breaking forth from under the threshold of the Temple. It was the great expectation of the spiritually-minded Jews, and most probably was constantly associated in their minds with other unspeakable benedictions which should come with the Messiah.

#### THE GREAT INVITATION.

It was on that eighth day that Jesus took occasion to use the circumstances and ceremonials of the feast to proclaim Himself as the personal object of saving faith, and to publish the great Gospel invitation. The revelation of His Messiahship made to the solitary woman at the well in Samaria was now proclaimed to all the people of Israel in the Temple.

His manner of delivery is intimated. If before He had been sitting and calmly teaching the people, now He stood up and with a voice raised to a higher pitch

by the occasion, by His intenseness of feeling, and by the importance of His announcement, He *cried*: "If any man thirst, let him come unto ME and drink. He that believeth on ME, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The people must have listened intently. Thirst is perhaps the most exigent, exacting, tormenting of human wants. It is universal; so universal that in all languages it is used as the most striking possible representation of any want felt at any time by any human being. In the East the scarcity of water increases its force as a representation of that which most satisfies. As the thirst of the spirit is more pressing and subtle and fierce than the thirst of the body, the Jewish Scriptures would naturally more frequently and more impressively employ it in appeals to men to find the water of life. And so wherever the Scriptures are known men have become familiar with this idea.

At the feast at which Jesus was speaking the water had been brought into the Temple and poured out during the preceding seven days. On the great concluding day, at the time of the morning sacrifice, a priest, from a golden pitcher, poured water that had been brought from Siloam, together with wine, into two perforated vessels on the west side of the altar, while the people sang: "*With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation*" (Isaiah xii., 3). Then the libations ceased. There was no more pouring forth of water at that great feast. The ceremony had ended; the ritual had been accomplished. Yet there were scores of souls there, as there are everywhere in large congregations assembled to worship, scores of souls who felt a still

unsatisfied spiritual thirst. To their spiritual insight the environment must have served to render more manifest and more significant the saying of Jesus, to which their spiritual sense of need would direct their attention.

#### WHAT THE INVITATION INCLUDED.

In the invitation several things are included. First of all, there must be a sincere thirst. Nothing that is not thirsted for can be regarded as greatly desirable. Then there must be knowledge of the fountain from which flows that which will satisfy. Men may construct cisterns which may receive the seepings of the high places or the drippings of the atmosphere of this world, but they will hold stagnant, not living water. And those cisterns may become broken, as cisterns of men generally do, and so even those stagnant waters will run out. But Jesus Christ is an enduring fountain, whose water never fails. When pleasure, money, fame, power, place, all the waters the world offers, fail us, then the living, that is, the flowing, water from Christ will satisfy us.

“Believing on” Jesus explains “coming to” Jesus. To be in spiritual need is to be thirsty; to believe is to drink that which assuages the thirst. But whosoever really drinks of this fountain finds himself become a fountain. His resources are within himself. He does not have to go to any Siloam for water. He can not be separated from the source of his satisfaction.

Nay, more: out of him, out of his heart, for that is what the word belly here means, “shall flow rivers of living water.” Can any thing be better than the words of Chrysostom? He calls attention to the plural. “*Rivers*, not a river, to show the copious and overflow-



ing power of grace, and *living* water—that is, always moving; for when the grace of the Spirit has entered into and settled in the mind, it flows more freely than any fountain, and neither fails, nor empties, nor stagnates. The wisdom of Stephen, the tongue of Peter, and the strength of Paul are evidences of this. Nothing hindered them; but, like impetuous torrents, they went on, carrying every thing along with them.” And so will it be with every Christian in proportion as he has spiritual insight into the words of Jesus and practically makes use of this divine Fountain of living water.

In His invitation Jesus said, “as the Scripture hath said.” Any precise representative of this apparent quotation has not been found in the Old Testament. It seems to be a phrase collecting in itself all the sayings of the Sacred Scriptures in any wise pointing to the ceremonies of this feast, or to the truth of God as a flowing refreshment to those who are spiritually thirsty. These are abundant, and the reader will find profit in culling out and devoutly studying, in addition to passages already quoted, such others as these: Isaiah xlv., 3, and lv., 1, and lviii., 11; Ezekiel xlvii., 1; Joel ii., 23; Zechariah xiii., 1, and xiv., 8; Jeremiah ii., 13; Proverbs iv., 23, and x., 11.

#### HE WAS SPEAKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We are told “that Jesus spake of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not glorified.” It is plain that the Holy Ghost not only had been, but had been operating at the creation of the world and at the birth of Jesus, and had appeared when the Messiah-

ship of Jesus had been recognized at His baptism; but He had not been revealed to the whole world. It was first the revelation of the Father, then the revelation of the Son, then, and now, the revelation of the Holy Ghost. The glorification of Jesus, by His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, made way for the Holy Spirit, whose residence in the church is an abiding presence of the spirit of Jesus, and whose residence in individual believers is their witness in them of the redemption and sanctification which they have through the Word.

The results of the great festal sermon are briefly stated. The people became divided in opinion. Some were for Him, admitting that He was a prophet, and some supposed that they were going much further by suggesting that He might be the very Christ. But others opposed both suppositions, because the Scriptures nowhere mentioned the coming of Christ out of Galilee, but do assign His place of birth to Bethlehem. And the division was so fierce that the people would have aided the emissaries of the Council, if there had not been something about Him which paralyzed every effort to lay hold upon Him. But who saw and accepted the Christ of God?

X.

**Spiritual Lineage.**

## JOHN VIII.

(31) *Jesus therefore said to those Jews which had believed Him, "If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; (32) and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* (33) *They answered unto Him, "We be Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man: how sayest Thou, Ye shall be made free?"* (34) *Jesus answered them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin. (35) And the bond-servant abideth not in the house forever: the Son abideth forever. (36) If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (37) I know that ye are Abraham's seed; yet ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath not free course in you. (38) I speak the things which I have seen with My Father: and ye also do the things which ye heard from your father."* (39) *They answered and said unto Him, "Our father is Abraham."* *Jesus saith unto them, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (40) But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham. (41) Ye do the works of your father."* *They said unto Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God."* (42) *Jesus said unto them, "If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. (43) Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye can not hear My word. (44) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father thereof. (45) But because I say the truth, ye believe Me not. (46) Which of you convicteth Me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe Me? (47) He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God."*

## SPIRITUAL LINEAGE.

“NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN.”

THE seventh day of the great feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, had closed. The constables who had been sent by the Sanhedrim to arrest Jesus had failed. When they arrived without Him, in reply to the question of their employers why they had not brought Him they replied . “Never man spake like this Man.” It required little spiritual insight to perceive that. Upon this followed an angry discussion, which was closed by the sensible suggestion of Nicodemus : “Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?” and the taunt which it evoked, “Art thou also of Galilee?”

Perhaps no more unfortunate mistake ever occurred in the division of the Gospel into chapters and verses than that which separated the fifty-third verse of the seventh from the first verse of the eighth chapter of John. You close one chapter by reading that “every man went into his own house.” Next day you resume your reading and begin the next chapter with “Jesus went to the Mount of Olives,” which seems to have nothing especially to do with the narrative which follows. But attach the first sentence of the eighth chapter to the last of the seventh, and this is the reading : “Every man went unto his own house ; Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.” There is a profound pathos in the collocation of the statements. After the festivities of the populace, after the hot and bitter pursuit of Jesus by the ecclesiastical authorities,

the people and the members of the Sanhedrim had their homes for a retreat, but the Son of Man went out alone to the cold mountains and the midnight air.

But the next morning He was early in the Temple and there occurred the touching incident of the woman taken in the act of adultery. The feast was nearly over, but many remained and Jesus still taught. The night before, the huge candelabra, which represented the pillar of fire which had guided their fathers through the wilderness, had been giving light. It was now extinguished. It may have been in allusion to that that Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world!" He invited the world to follow Him. This induced His enemies to attack Him. His reply was so spirited, so elevated, so consistent with what their Messiah should be as to induce many of the Jews to become disposed to believe on Him.

To these Jews He made an address which may well be a subject for study to all His disciples in all time. It is the test of willingness to continue in the discipleship of Jesus. It is this: "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and you will know the truth, and the truth will emancipate you" (vs. 31).

#### WHAT IT IS TO BE A DISCIPLE.

There may be the *appearance* of being a disciple in one who is not a disciple. One may be a disciple in mere adherence to the company of disciples. One may go further and actually believe in our Lord, in all that He claims for Himself as the Son of God, the Light of the world, the Bread and Water of life, and yet not be a disciple in the sense of being a learner. One may even go so far as to receive into his intellect much doctrinal and ethical

teaching from Christ. But he only is the true disciple who studies every word of Jesus for the purpose of bringing it to operate on his own life. A man may plunge into the sea and swim awhile, but he can not "abide," he can not "continue" therein as a fish can. A fish may leap from the water and be a short while in the air, but it can not "abide," it can not "continue" therein as a bird can. There is such a thing as a "*flying* fish," but it is not a "true" bird, a bird "indeed." So, if we are to be Christ's disciples indeed, we must be able to make our home in the word of Christ; our spirits must drink in that word as our bodies inhale the atmosphere.

All along through this discourse of our Lord there was a thread of high spiritual thought, of which we must not lose sight while engaged with the details.

#### THE LOVE OF FREEDOM.

In the address of Christ there is an appeal to the love of freedom which seems so natural to our humanity. Men make mistakes about its nature, and about its use, and especially about the way to secure it, but in all ages, among people of all kinds of culture, from birth to death, the cry of the soul is for freedom. Almost the first indication of rationality in a human babe is its impatience of control, and from that to the highest human literature and the loftiest flight of human song and the widest sweep of human eloquence, the silent endurance, the sighing, the moaning, the praying, the toiling, the fighting, the shouting for freedom, have made the most noteworthy portion of human history. It has been physical freedom, and intellectual freedom, and social freedom, and civil freedom.

When any sentiment is so deeply imbedded, so vigorous, so persistent, and so universal, we may well pause to inquire its cause and its source. May it not come from our divine origin? God is free. It is impossible to think of God under any restrictive conditions. If, in any sense, man be a child of God, he must inherit some of the traits of his paternity. Perhaps the most conspicuous of these is his original freedom of will. In that man is most godlike. Nothing outside the will can enslave the will. It may surrender itself, but neither God nor the devil could compel it against itself.

Just in proportion as freedom is unspeakably desirable is slavery unspeakably detestable to our human nature. The lowest state to which a human being can fall, it is generally supposed, is slavery. No taunt of reproach can go deeper than the charge against a man that he is willingly a slave. No appeal to men of high character is so powerful as that which stirs them to resist or to throw off slavery.

#### THE CHRIST'S APPEAL TO THAT LOVE.

It was to this ineffaceable trait of human nature that Jesus appealed in His discourses. They would be free, those Jews who had an impulse to add themselves to the number of His followers. They felt the Roman yoke intolerable, they longed for the coming of some one of their own people who might break that yoke. Every claimant, therefore, had some hearing. Here was a young man, risen out of Galilee, it is true, but speaking as never man spake, and doing such wonderful things as to create the suspicion that He might be the Messiah. Could He not secure their freedom? Might there not



reside in Him some genius for conquest and government which would enable Him to make them conquerors of their masters and bring Rome to the feet of Jerusalem? Such probably was their idea. Their own personal enslavement to their lusts and passions and prejudices, which had degraded them from their high estate of being the leaders and teachers of the nations to the low condition of being the vilest people on the face of the earth, had never given a pang of pain or shame. Their very ideal of freedom was base.

But not so with Jesus. "Free": that word touched the top of thought, as He saw it. Free! That is what God is! Free! That is to be far above whatever can weaken or degrade or destroy. Such freedom can not be merely of the body or of the intellect; it can not have reference merely to one's surroundings. It must be in the inmost man; it must reside in the spirit. Such spiritual freedom from all bewildering error, from all enslaving forces of evil, is the loftiest ideal. Indeed, nothing is evil that does not enslave the spirit, and nothing is good that does not promote the freedom of the spirit. God's eternal joy and goodness is in His perfect freedom.

This, then, is that to which we should aspire. None of us have ever enjoyed God's perfect freedom for a single hour, and perhaps we never can while in the flesh. But it is the ideal toward which we must be constantly working while always aspiring. We may thus attain a freedom so like God's, that it may be for us human beings what God's freedom is for Him. What can make us free? Can any thing without us, any mere mission, any certificate of membership in any guild,

ecclesiastical or other? No. It must be wrought within. "The truth will make you free," said Jesus. It is the absence of heat which makes cold; it is the absence of light which makes darkness; it is the absence of truth that makes slavery. Then, the presence of truth makes freedom? Precisely so. "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

#### KNOWING THE TRUTH.

But how am I to "know the truth"? Surely Jesus meant something deeper than the mere perception of the relation of terms, than the mere acceptance of propositions, than mere intellectual orthodoxy. He was addressing those who, under the excitement of His speech, had felt disposed to associate with Him and His friends, but who had no high ideal and no deep spiritual thirst. He shows that to be one of His disciples, more is necessary than merely to be captivated in the imagination by either Christ's speech or personality. "If you remain in My word, make yourself at home in My mode of thought, and carry My teaching into your practical every-day life, then ye are My disciples truly."

This, then, seems to be the teaching of Jesus. He claims not the place of Rabbi so much as that of Lord. He comes to govern as well as to teach. I must take His word, that which contains His thought, as the paramount law of my life, I must obey it, all of it, altogether, always. There is to be no questioning it. There is, of course, then, to be no comparing of it with any other utterances. It is to be not only the supreme, but the one and only rule of my whole inner and outer life. Living in it, making it my life's home, abiding in it, I

shall know the truth and the truth shall emancipate me from spiritual slavery.

### CONSISTENT PHILOSOPHY.

Profoundly consistent is this teaching with our best philosophic analysis of the working of human nature and our usual practice in all departments except religion. *There* we go upon the supposition if we can first free ourselves we shall be able to learn the truth and that knowledge of the truth shall make us good. This is not true according to Jesus, nor is it our own method in other departments. A child is not first taught mathematical truth and then set to working sums, but the contrary. And in his beginning he does not *believe* that two and two make four because he *knows* it, but he *knows* it because he *believes* it. The beginning of Sir Isaac Newton's mathematical education lay in the fact that he *believed* when he was told that twice two always would be four. All a man's *knowledge* simply is so much of his *belief* as his intellect uses.

Do men become good by being orthodox? No. But they do become orthodox by being good. Does the cultivation of the intellect make the life good? No. But an earnest effort to purify the heart always quickens and improves the intellect. What time many men do waste in preparing themselves for virtuous living by striving to find answers to profound metaphysical questions! How many men deceive themselves by supposing that they *wish* to be free from sin and that they *wish* to know the truth. And they confirm themselves in this error by reading all they can against Jesus and Christianity on the ground of *hearing the other side*! It is all

a mistake. No man now living who has read the Gospel or even heard much of Jesus is an infidel except upon choice. Jesus has declared that to be His disciple a man has only to continue in His word. With great or little intellect any man can do that, and no man has ever done that who has not come into the radiance of truth and the splendor of spiritual freedom.

#### THE CURE FOR INFIDELITY.

The cure for infidelity is obedience. No matter what a man may think or not think of Jesus, let him begin at the beginning of the Gospel and go to the end, step by step, day by day, asking what Jesus would have him do, and *doing it* with all his might, conscientiously, persistently, regardless of the consequences, and he will not only make a good life, but he will believe all he ought to believe, of Jesus, of humanity, of divinity, of things temporal and of things eternal. Orthodoxy may not always produce orthopraxy, but right living is always a very great help to right thinking. Very profound, very lofty, very wide is the saying of Jesus, "If ye continue in My truth ye are My disciples indeed; and ye will know the truth and the truth will make you free."

So besotted were the hearers of Jesus, that they drew all His high sayings down to the plane of material things. His very attempt to teach them how to ascend aroused their resentment, and they replied that they regarded His speech as enigmatical, if not impertinent. They were Abraham's descendants, "were never in slavery to any man." So blinding is sin! They forgot that their fathers had been in captivity in Egypt and in Babylon; they forgot that at that very moment and in their own

land they were subjugated by Rome, by whose sufferance they remained in Palestine under the merest "semblance of political independence."

### THE SLAVERY OF SIN.

But Jesus waived this foolish reply of theirs, and recalled them to the fact that He was speaking of spiritual things. With His emphatic and solemn mode of introducing His most important asseverations, He said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, every one who practices sin is sin's slave." That is the statement of a tremendous reality. It refutes the vain belief of many a man that sin is the sinner's slave, to serve the sinner and to bring him pleasure and gain.

He connects with this a certain consequence: "The slave is not at home in the house in perpetuity." He is liable to be sent away. But "the Son is at home in perpetuity." You can not of yourself secure your place in the Father's house; but the Son, who is the heir, and can no more be cast out than can the Father, He is able to give you the freedom of God's home. "If He shall make you free you shall be free indeed." That is, you shall not have the semblance of being at home; you shall enjoy the reality, and not temporarily and uncertainly; but as the Son remains forever, so also those to whom He gives the freedom of the house will remain for ever.

### SPIRITUAL PATERNITY AND HEREDITY.

Then Jesus called their attention to spiritual paternity and heredity, as distinguished from that which is merely physical. He knew that according to the flesh

they were of Abraham's seed, but spiritually they were the devil's children, they were sin's slaves. They exhibited in their character and lives the spiritual lineaments which showed their spiritual lineage. And He did the same in His. They made manifest who their father was by their spiritual physiognomy ; He did the same. He spoke the things that pleased God ; they did the things which pleased the devil. Plainly Jesus believed as certainly in a personal devil as He did in that of a personal Cæsar. To Him the devil was no Persian myth, no merely poetically personified "tendency": he was a real person.

Those who were listening to Jesus had felt an impulse to become His disciples, but they had gone back and were ready to co-operate with those who were seeking to kill Him, whose only fault was that He had told them the truth of God. At first they had seemed about to surrender to His demands and yield their hearts like a conquered kingdom ; and like troops, some of His words had found a little place in them, but His word had not overspread their hearts, as troops might overspread a conquered territory (vs. 37). So they had returned to their murderous disposition. So it is to this day. Men hear Christ preached and are somewhat charmed ; but they do not set themselves to bringing their lives into perfect subjection to the Lord, and so they go back to their old master, sin.

#### FATHER ABRAHAM.

These Jews retorted that Abraham was their father. Jesus had already admitted that after the flesh this was so ; but He denied that it was true spiritually. "If you

were Abraham's children you would do Abraham's works." The argument is that they did not the works that Abraham did, so that there was nothing in their walk or talk or other spiritual indication to suggest their spiritual descent from Abraham. Abraham loved the truth and received the truth, but they were about to kill a man for bringing them God's truth. This did not Abraham. Nevertheless, He admits that He did see their likeness to their father, but that father most certainly was not Abraham.

They began to perceive that Christ's discourse was spiritual. That led them to declare that God was their father; but they rested the claim to this sonship on the fact that they were Abraham's seed, so blind were they as not to see that spiritual kinship can not have physical basis. To show then the baselessness of this claim He points to the fact that they did not love Him, and to the general truth, which is true in this day as in theirs, that whoso knows Jesus and does not love Him can make no good claim to any spiritual kinship with God. That is the ethical, spiritual test. Every man's character is measured by his love for Jesus of Nazareth.

It was very disheartening. No wonder Jesus exclaimed so pathetically, "Why do you not understand My idiom?" And answered His own question by, "Because you are not able to hear My discourse." They had rendered themselves spiritually incapable of receiving the matter of His discourse, and so the spiritually idiomatic phrases were distorted. Their whole spiritual nature had become false. They were so the children of the lying, murderous devil that they were color-blind to truth. They could receive a lie, but had no room for

truth. They had no spiritual connection with God, and therefore could not receive the truth.

### TWO TEST QUESTIONS.

The two questions of Jesus, which the Jews could not answer, remain for the world, through all the subsequent ages, nailed up at the door of every church, school, court-house, and chamber of Christendom. They have been read by saint and sinner, by boor and courtier, by scholar and ignoramus, by king and peasant, by poet and philosopher. Here they are :

1. "Which of you convicteth Me of any sin?"

Pilate examined Him and solemnly averred, "I find no fault in Him." And century after century the most acute and robust intellects have stood up before the superb personality of Jesus and heard the challenge question of Jesus, and every thinker and speaker whose thought and speech have commanded the respect of the world has responded : "The verdict of Pilate is my verdict : I also find no fault in Him."

2. "Then, if the truth is what I speak, what is the ground of your disbelief?"

No man, in any Christian century, has been able to point to a single inch of rational ground on which the rejection of Jesus can be placed. They may make faces at Him. They may be scurrilous and call Him a Samaritan, a Jew, and a devil, but when He confronts them, as He will do wherever they are, living or dying or dead, with, "Why do you disbelieve Me?" they must be silent forever, even when silence must prove forever their confusion and their damnation.



XI.

*Sight and Insight.*

## JOHN IX.

(1) *And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from his birth.* (2) *And His disciples asked Him, saying, " Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?"* (3) *Jesus answered, " Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.* (4) *We must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.* (5) *When I am in the world, I am the light of the world."* (6) *When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay,* (7) *and said unto him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing.* (8) *The neighbors therefore, and they which saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, " Is not this he that sat and begged?"* (9) *Others said, " It is he": others said, " No, but he is like him." He said, " I am he."* (10) *They said therefore unto him, " How then were thine eyes opened?"* (11) *He answered, " The man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went away and washed, and I received sight."* (35) *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and finding him, He said, " Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"* (36) *He answered and said, " And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?"* (37) *Jesus said unto him, " Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee."*

## SIGHT AND INSIGHT.

### A BLIND MAN.

THEY had taken up stones to stone Him, those ecclesiastical foes of Jesus. His positive, high talk had exasperated them; and when He declared, as regarded the venerated father of their race: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I AM," thus not only taking precedence of Abraham, but applying to Himself the name of Jehovah, He seemed to them a blasphemer, and they began to stone Him. He escaped and went away.

As He was walking along, apparently incidentally He saw a blind man. Nothing is more common in the East than diseases of the eyes. Blind beggars were usual spectacles in Jerusalem. This man had been blind from his birth, and probably a beggar all his life, and was personally well known to very many of the inhabitants. Perhaps the disciples and Jesus had seen him before. But to-day Jesus, the hated, hunted Jesus, the rejected prophet, may have given the beggar a look of unusual compassion. Ordinarily our troubles and sufferings make us selfish. The grandeur of Jesus is that His own distress did not draw His love in from humanity, but rather intensified His tenderness. Perhaps we have all longed to know just the expression on the face of Jesus as He bent His eyes, still probably flashing from the excitement of the late controversy, down on the sightless balls of the poor beggar by the

wayside. It must have been peculiar, as it averted the attention of the disciples.

### BLIND AND "BORN BLIND."

It is interesting to note the difference in the feelings of the disciples and those of Jesus at the contemplation of a man who had been born blind.

Perhaps the disciples revolved in their minds the deep seriousness of congenital sightlessness. It is an inconvenience, a difficulty, an embarrassment, to be deprived of sight under any circumstances. But if a man has had the use of vision through the first years of his existence, it will have furnished him with pictures of sky and land and sea, of the works of art and human forces—pictures hung up in his memory, pictures he can revisit and retouch with the pencil of imagination, pictures to relieve the monotony of a life which can add nothing more to the stores that can be gathered by the sense of sight.

But to him who has been born blind there are no such resources. He has never seen the bloom of a flower, or the flash of a bird's wing, or the motion of a running horse, or the wide plain, or the grand mountain, or the flowing stream, or the beautiful and noble works of architecture, or the immense ocean, or the "brave-o'er-hanging" vault of heaven. The arch smile of a little child, the delicate tint of a maiden's blush, the beauty of the human eye, and even his mother's face—the thing that stands apart from all other sights, because each man's mother's look is something different from all the other looks of all the other mothers in the world—all these are things of which he knows no more than does

the stone against which he stumbles in his ungraceful, shambling walk.

### A METAPHYSICAL CONUNDRUM.

Perhaps the disciples thought of all this as they gazed upon the poor blind beggar at their feet. And yet their compassion was not stirred. The spectacle rather suggested a metaphysical conundrum, and they turned to Jesus with the question: "Rabbi, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Notice the assumptions of this question.

1. It assumes at least the possibility of a previous state of conscious existence in which there may have been ethical conditions—that is, in which the person may have been able to sin. We learn that the idea of metempsychosis was not unknown among the Jews in the time of Jesus. The doctrine of the pre-existence of souls was maintained by the Rabbins, the Essenes, in the Cabbala, and in Wisdom viii., 19.

2. It assumes that every affliction was caused by the sin of the sufferer himself, or by that of his ancestors; if in this case it could not be traced to the man's parents it rested with him, and must therefore have been committed before his birth-hour in this life; and underneath it all lay this presupposition as something that could never be even so much as questioned, as the rule without any exception, namely: *Every pain is the product of sin.* This is an old doctrine, as old as any literature. When Job had led an apparently faultless and exemplary life, yet had had that life overwhelmed by stupendous misfortunes, he was visited by probably the three other greatest men of his age. They gave seven

days to the study of this unexampled case, and the result of the most profound research of the ablest intellects of that age was no other solution of the difficulty than that suggested by the question of Eliphaz the Temanite: "Are the comforts of God small with thee? Is there any *secret thing* with thee?" The intimation is that although Job had lived unblamed of men, there must be in him some sin known to God: there was no other explanation. So through all the Greek tragedies there surges that thought that pain is the child of sin; it is the hunting, sure-scented, sure-footed Nemesis that dogs the steps of the sinner until the moment for the final and fatal blow to fall. And this belief was prevalent and dominant among the Jews in the time of Christ.

#### PAIN IN THE UNIVERSE.

This doctrine Jesus overthrows. It is true, and always has been true, and in the nature of things always must be true, that there is no sin without pain, pain at the moment or pain subsequently. But the converse is not true. It is a product of a logical fallacy, the fallacy of converting a universal affirmative proposition. Because there *is no sin without pain* it does not follow that there *is no pain without sin*, any more than that because no man exists without having been born it follows that every thing which has been born is a man.

No; Jesus teaches that much that we call pain, privation, trouble, is part of an immense, a glorious, a beneficent plan. "What God works" is too large for comprehension, but we can apprehend its goodness. In this case Jesus could not have meant that neither this man

nor his parents had ever violated the moral law, but that no sin of theirs had resulted in the congenital blindness of this beggar. This man's was a single case of those miraculous healings which, taken together, form a species of that genus which is well described as "what God works." Jesus claimed to be God, and yet was a sufferer; all the world pronounces Him faultless, and yet He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs." The noblest crown ever worn by man or God was a crown of thorns. No human being has ever touched the height of his possible altitude until he had pain. Even Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, was "made perfect through suffering." On the other hand, the highest possible capability of a human being is to believe, and the grandest object of belief is Jesus. So He says: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

Thus in both ways, on the side of the Healer and on the side of the healed, "the works of God" would "be made manifest" in this blind beggar.

As if to justify Himself for stopping in a moment and place of peril to perform this cure and manifest this work of God, Jesus said: "It is necessary for Me to work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work" (vs. 4). The latter part of the sentence is a well-known proverb, teaching that the day of opportunity is passing while it is present. The lost opportunity is irrecoverable. The form of the proverb very naturally brought up, by association of ideas, the nature of the beggar's trouble and Christ's own office as illuminator of the world. And on the eyes of blindness He was about to pour the light

of day. "As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world."

### THE MIRACULOUS HEALING.

Then Jesus spat upon the ground and made clay of the spittle and daubed the man's eyes. Why should He have done this? He did not always show any visible sign and use any external means, as, for instance, in the case (in Matt. xx.) of the healing of the two blind men, where He merely touched the eyes. Nor can the application He made in this case be considered in any way remedial. We know that among the ancients saliva was supposed to be good for sore eyes, and there is some intimation that clay also was supposed to have some medicinal virtue. Yet, so far as can be learned, these were supposed to be useful only in the case of external sores.

But here was a blindness not seated in any sores in the flesh nor any growth upon the ball; nor was it the result of any recent derangement of the organ of vision. It was congenital. The man was born with no more power of sight in his eyes than in his thumbs. What was to be done for him was something equivalent to the creation and insertion of a totally new organ.

We must, therefore, conclude that the use of the clay had no reference to the man's body. But the ceremonial may have had reference to the man's inner nature: it may have had an ethical direction. It is not difficult to perceive how the man's faith may have been helped by this appeal to his bodily senses. For this is the great end of the movements of the universe, so far as man is concerned, namely, the development of his faith, as a man's greatness resides in his faith-power: the greater



the capability of believing, the greater the man ; mankind being classified, not by sex, or age, or weight, or intellectual ability, but by the ability to believe ; faith being the loftiest known function of a human being, that in him which is to be everlastingly cultivated.

#### A TEST OF FAITH.

Then immediately followed a test of the man's faith. "Go wash in the pool of Siloam," said Jesus to him. To every mind this will probably recall the case of Naaman the Syrian, who was told by the prophet to go and wash seven times in the Jordan. The proud captain was a rationalist, that is to say, one who trusted to the weaker rather than to the stronger, to the human reason rather than to God. He declined to go, and assigned what seems to be an unanswerable argument. The blind beggar had more sense and more humility. He said neither "Yes" nor "No." He simply *did as he was bid* ; and that is true religion. The description of the process is brief and well-nigh sublime : "He went his way, therefore, and washed and came seeing." The pool was known to him most probably. The fountain thereof issued from below the Temple. It was not far to go. He lost no time. He did not argue against the command ; he employed his reasoning power to enable him to follow the directions of Jesus. From the beginning he might have reasoned against the whole proceeding. He knew that the general belief was that while there may be nostrums which occasionally help some forms of ophthalmia, there is no cure for any one who has been *born* blind. He could have said to the prophet from Galilee : "What is this ? I have no common sore

eyes. Born blind, how do you expect the clay to create what has never been in my eyes, the power of vision? Can it penetrate to the core of my eye and put the sense of light there? If I go to Siloam, all its waters can do is to wash the clay away, and then I shall be only as I was before the clay was daubed upon my face. I might just as well have a little water brought in here and wash this stuff off." That is the way men talk now when the Christ gives some ethical direction. But the blind beggar had something better than sight, better than money. He had faith.

#### OBEDIENCE.

"He went, *therefore*": wherefore? Because Jesus had told him. "He washed": that is, he did his part as he was told. He could not perform a miracle, but he could obey Jesus. "And he came seeing." He was set on a new life, a life adapting itself to the environments made by sight and enjoying all the pleasures granted by sight. He seems to have gone to his friends, not to Jesus. And they noticed something different in him, and yet he was the same man. They had seen him too often not to know him. And yet there was something different. He did not sit begging. His movements were new and his face was altered. O, what a difference sight makes in the countenance! Is it not sight which puts the countenance in the face? Has a dead man any countenance? The face of this blind man was precisely the same after as before the sight came; but the sight let the spirit play on the face; and in this case Christ had become the light of the countenance of the blind beggar. "Can this be he?"

the neighbors asked. "Yes ; I am he," said the restored man.

#### A JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION.

It has been said that it is greatly to be desired that there had been some judicial investigation of one of the miracles. Well, here it is. The Sanhedrim took up this case of the blind man and gave it a most searching investigation. The result is that after careful examination a jury, deeply prejudiced against the fact of the miracle, and deeply hating Him who performed it, and deeply incensed against the man who was benefited by the miracle, were shut up by the overwhelming evidence to the verdict that here had been performed an act which was possible only to God. That will end it with all fair minds. The court could pursue Jesus not on the ground of being an imposter, but on the charge of violating a human ritual in the performance of a divine act of excellent mercy. So they took up the pursuit of Jesus after having excommunicated the happy beggar, who must have always felt that it was better to be saved outside than damned inside the Church.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, pursued as He was by the ecclesiastical wolves, went hunting His poor sheep who had been turned out of the fold. And He "*found* him." He always does find the one lost sheep. He said to the restored man: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He had believed to the opening of his bodily eyes; now must his spirit be enlightened. The man probably knew that that was equivalent to asking him whether he believed on Jesus as the Messiah. He was a frank, blunt, straightforward man. He did not know any one

who claimed to be the Messiah, but the fact that Jesus had performed a gracious miracle on him prepared him to accept any one as Messiah on the testimony of Jesus. Then Jesus told the man that He himself was the Son of God, the Messiah. And the man believed. And the man worshiped.

Notice that Jesus made the acknowledgment of His Messiahship only to the woman at the well of Samaria and to this man: to a prostitute and to a beggar. What divine condescensions!

Notice the progress of the new life: (1) It is obedience, implicit, unquestioning obedience to the Lord's commands; (2) increase of spiritual insight, the product of obedience; (3) worship of Jesus, the product of spiritual insight.

How could a mere Galilean fisherman present such a marvelous psychological study as this?

XII.

**The Beautiful Good Shepherd.**

## JOHN X.

(1) "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.* (2) *But he that entereth in by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.* (3) *To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.* (4) *When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.* (5) *And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*" (6) *This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.* (7) *Jesus therefore said unto them again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.* (8) *All that came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.* (9) *I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.* (10) *The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.* (11) *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.* (12) *He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them: (13) he fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.* (14) *I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me,* (15) *even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.* (16) *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."*

## THE BEAUTIFUL GOOD SHEPHERD.

### MIXED METAPHORS.

WHEN Jesus met the blind man to whom He had given sight and had His conversation with him there appear to have been present some of the Pharisees, who seem to have dogged His steps. Upon the blind man's acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, He fell into a soliloquy, saying to Himself: "For judgment have I come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." Then the self-conceited Pharisees asked: "Are we blind also?" And Jesus replied: "If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, *We see*; therefore your sin remaineth." It was in continuation of that statement that Jesus uttered His discourse on the Fold, the Shepherd, and the Sheep.

This discourse violates the stiffness of our modern rhetoric. There is a free mixture of metaphors, in which the same person is represented now as a door, and then as a sheep, and then as a shepherd. Nevertheless it is probable that no reader, learned or unlearned, has ever been confused by the shifting of figures. The speech is an allegory rather than a parable: it sets one thing to represent another instead of telling a story with a moral. It takes the facts of shepherd life to represent the facts in the kingdom of God. The chief lesson is the relation of Jesus to all the flocks of God, as the True Chief Shepherd, and the relation of all false teachers to Him, as enemies to Him, and so enemies to God's flocks

in every place and time. In setting that forth other lessons are suggested.

### THE SHEEPFOLD.

In the first place of all there is the sheepfold. A fold separates a certain space from all space. In the case of the sheepfold it does separate the sheep that are entered from all other things. There certainly is not only a difference among God's own sheep, but there is also a distinction between God's sheep and all other animals, whether brute or human. The fence or wall that divides God's sheep from the world is invisible. It is religious and ethical. But there is difference between inclosures, whether moral or physical. Among the latter a fort incloses as well as a prison, but the latter *keeps in* and the former *keeps out*. A sheepfold is of the former character. It is not constructed to confine the sheep. They would naturally keep together so much at night that if there were no danger from thieves and wild beasts it would scarcely be worth while to build folds. The fold is especially protective.

It is important to notice that. Much harm has come to souls from misapprehension of this distinction. Take the moral law, for instance. How like a prison it seems to many men! One feels, if he does not say, Oh, if it were not wrong to steal, how I could increase my estate! Another, Oh, if it were not wrong to commit adultery, how my pleasures in life could be increased! They feel like a foolish sheep in a fold might be fancied to feel, namely, that the fold was made to keep him in, provokingly curtailing his privileges, not seeing that it is the fold which permits him to rest in security by excluding



whatsoever would harm him. To one of God's sheep the existence of God's fold seems due to the fact of his spiritual danger. So everywhere the divine sanction to the moral distinction between right and wrong is distinctively protective. All the sheep inside that fold are on the right side and are safe, while all outside are in great peril.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SHEPHERD.

Now, that is real because it is ideal. The ideal is a reality as certainly as is the practical. But the tendency of the ideal is to become concrete. Those who are God's spiritual sheep find out one another and collect together because they are gregarious. Hence communities, societies, churches, whatever you call them. And these flocks have shepherds' care. The figure is mixed, but the thought is clear. Jesus gives the characteristics of a true shepherd. It is to be observed that, in verse 2, the translation should be "*a* shepherd of the sheep." There are two allegories in this speech. The first regards the shepherds of the visible folds, and the second the Shepherds of the whole flock of God. In regard to the former:

1. Each has entered God's fold by the door, and there are not two doors to a fold; and Jesus says that He is the door of the sheep. That is to say that no man can be a good pastor of any church who has not entered God's fold through Christ. Whatever may be his natural gifts, whatever his acquired learning and refinement, whatever his ecclesiastical training and ordination, the essential thing to a proper pastorate is that the pastor shall have come to God through Christ. If he

assume the pastorate by reason of educational equipment and ecclesiastical ordination, Christ pronounces him "a thief and a robber." An atheist or a deist may be ordained by the imposition of hands, but he can not deceive any one whose approach to God has been only through Christ.

2. The next characteristic of the true pastor is that the porter openeth to him. It is not safe or profitable to strain every part of a parable or an allegory. It may not be best to designate this "porter," this doorkeeper, precisely and positively. Because so many devout and thoughtful men have interpreted this name to indicate the Holy Spirit we can not cast contempt on that suggestion, especially when we read in Acts xiv., 27 that Paul and Barnabas tell how God had "opened" the "door" of faith unto the Gentiles, and Paul reports how "a great door and effectual had been opened" to him in Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi., 9); and a "door" had been "opened" in Troas (2 Cor. ii., 12); and solicits the saints in Colosse to pray that God would "open" a "door" for him (Col. iv., 3). Whoever the porter be, the second characteristic of a good pastor is that he certainly has access to the hearts of God's people.

3. They listen to His voice. It is the voice that tells the personality. It is the voice that made the communication : not merely the dry thought, but the spirit of the speaker. There is an electric change superinduced by the voice in producing undulations of air. And each voice has a characteristic electric effect. There is a difference between reading a discourse and hearing that discourse, a difference which perhaps lies at the foundation of God's ordinance that His truth

should take the world by "the foolishness of preaching." Each pastor has his own voice. There are no sheep to whom some voice is not adapted, and the man who has *that* voice is *that* sheep's pastor. Hence the great difference in pastors, because there is such a great difference in sheep. "His own sheep" "hear his voice."

4. There are many beautiful stories told of shepherd-life, of the beautiful intimacy between the sheep and the shepherd. In the East there may be the several flocks of several shepherds kept in the same fold through the night, but in the morning each shepherd calls his sheep, and he calls them by name. Sometimes the name is given on account of some peculiarity which is a defect, an infirmity, or a deformity. Sometimes it is "One-eye," sometimes "Torn-ear," sometimes "Broken-leg"; but each sheep knows his name. And the shepherd's intimacy grows with each morning's call, and he seems to love those sheep which are marked by some peculiarity, and sometimes he loves it on account of that peculiarity. The "voice" is not merely that which gives forth sound, but that which also carries the pulsations of the shepherd's heart in the articulate utterance of his vocal organs.

The story is told of a traveler in Greece who found three flocks in one fold, all mingled together. Although there were two thousand of them, each shepherd called "his own," and *his* sheep came out, "all" *his* sheep, and not one that belonged to either of the other two shepherds. The traveler thought that the sheep knew each his shepherd by his dress, and said so. Then he changed dresses with one of the shepherds, and began to call the sheep. They lifted their heads a moment at

hearing their names called, and looked at the caller, but although he had on their shepherd's dress, the sheep turned away and paid no further attention until the shepherd himself called, and then the sheep came at his bidding.

5. He leadeth His sheep : every good pastor does this. He has explored the road, looking for pasture, and he has come back, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the sheep, in order that he may bring them to the nourishment which is needed and desired by them. "He goeth before" : he does not drive. He still uses the attraction of his voice. He keeps in front. If there be any danger he will be the first to see it and the first to meet it, and will be on hand to ward it off. He may have to lift a lame sheep over a rough place, or carry some lamb in his bosom when the flock is crossing a stream.

#### HOW FLOCKS ARE FORMED.

It is thus that flocks are formed. True, flocks do not choose their shepherds, but shepherds choose their flocks. But there is something in each shepherd which specially suits each sheep, or else he soon gets rid of that sheep. Just as it is in our modern Christian life, in what we call "churches." We do see congregations, flocks of Christians choosing their pastor. When such a thing occurs, the new *man* comes, but he is not felt as a pastor until his "voice" has been heard. After he has taught in private and in public for a while some of the sheep drop off and go to other folds. And they do right. There is but one reason for being a member of any congregation, and that is the fact that the preaching

there feeds, comforts, helps, guides, and strengthens the parishioner. Locality, congenial society, denomination, worldly advantages, should have little to do with it. "Who is the man that most helps me in my Christian life?" is the one question. I can move my residence, I can form new associations, but I must be under the pastoral care not only of a soul-feeder, but of one who can feed *my* soul. It is no disparagement to the pastor I leave. He may be the very man to lead and feed a thousand other souls whom the man who is to be my pastor could not reach. Let six men of God who have themselves spiritually entered the fold through the only door, through Jesus Christ, go into a town of five thousand inhabitants and continue to preach the Gospel in private and in public, according to their several ability : and let all the people from time to time hear all these men : in process of time they will gather around these men, each going to his own shepherd, the shepherd whose voice reaches, arouses, calls them. And when each pastor has called out his own, there may still be a thousand people who not yet have heard their pastor's voice ; but when the next preacher lifts up his voice, behold, his sheep know it.

A Sunday-school teacher is one of the under-shepherds, and all that is said of shepherds must apply to them.

The Pharisees who were around Jesus were the men who claimed to be the pastors of God's sheep in their day. So dull, so blind, so self-conceited were they that they understood nothing of this striking allegory. Then Jesus, by using that introduction to most solemn speech which must have become familiar to the Pharisees,

“Verily, verily, I say unto you,” proceeded to say: “I am the door of sheep. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers.” Well, who had come before Jesus? The devil, the wolf of hell, the false shepherd, who had come to steal, to kill, and to devour, who was “the first thief that clomb into the fold of God,” whose followers were the Pharisees then present, wherefore Jesus employed the present tense and said, “*are* thieves and robbers.”

#### A SECOND ALLEGORY.

The first allegory is followed by another, in which He makes the shepherd representative of Himself. “*I am the Beautiful Shepherd*,” says He. And He does not employ a word which conveys the mere idea of comeliness, or is simply indicative of that which addresses the æsthetic sense in man, but a word that contains the double idea of attractiveness and goodness, expressing that beauty which can not exist without goodness, that which is attractive not because of superficial contour and color, but that the symmetry of which satisfies the intellect, while its inner self kindles the affections. In English we must call Him “the Beautiful Good Shepherd,” if we would embrace the ideas in the epithet which He applies to Himself.

This Shepherd gives all His sheep life, liberty, and succor. Life is something more than mere existence. An oyster has life in the sense of mere vitality. But life means all the best and most desirable things which a human being can gather to his spirit out of all the things within his reach. The Good Shepherd came that His sheep “might have life and have it more abun-

dantly." He heaps life up for all His sheep. He knows the places where they can get the best, and He carries them hither by a wonderfully wise and tender providence. Sometimes the pasture lies far away, and it is therefore a long journey. His sheep often wonder why He does not let them stay where they are, but they would die there if He did not carry them forward. Sometimes His treatment seems very harsh, but He is bringing them where they should be, and where they would be if they only knew what was best for them and where that was. A shepherd once was striving to get his flock up from a valley where all the pasture had been consumed to a table-land where he knew the grazing was abundant. But the ascent was rough, and the flock reluctant. They knew their shepherd, but they would not climb. And then he took a lamb and laid it on the ledge. It missed its mother, and crept to the edge and bleated; the mother sheep had missed her baby lamb, and wondered that the shepherd had been so cruel as to take her only one; but she could not stay from her lamb: she soon found her way to the summit, and the whole gregarious flock soon followed. So sometimes a dead child in a congregation has been more powerful than the living pastor, because the Great, Beautiful, Good Shepherd knew us all so well.

And the Beautiful Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. So does every good pastor. In actual life, in Scotland, in the East, the shepherd perils his life for the flock. He is exposed to all changes of weather. He encounters wild beasts in the fury of their hunger. David tells how he slew a lion and a bear in defense of his flock. Every father of a family worthy

his privilege dedicates his life to that family, and will work himself to death, if need be, for their support. Every mother lays her life down on the altar of motherhood. Every pastor of a church lays down his life, with all that is in it, for the flock whereof God has made him shepherd. And He, Chief Shepherd, Best Shepherd, Most Beautiful Shepherd, hath bound us to Him forever by the new, deep, thrilling tones which came into His voice, amid the agonies of Golgotha, when He gave His life for all His sheep. Wherever, in all places and times, there are those who hear that voice and follow it, Jesus, Beautiful Shepherd, must bring them together, that His heart's desire may be fulfilled, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.



XIII.

The Life and the Resurrection.

## JOHN XI.

(21) *Martha therefore said unto Jesus, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. (22) And even now I know that, whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give Thee."* (23) *Jesus saith unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again."* (24) *Martha saith unto Him, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* (25) *Jesus saith unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: (26) and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"* (27) *She saith unto him, "Yea, Lord: I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world."* (28) *And when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, "The Master is here, and calleth thee."* (29) *And she, when she heard it, arose quickly, and went unto Him. (30) Now Jesus was not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. (31) The Jews then which were with her in the house, and were comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she was going into the tomb to weep there. (32) Mary therefore, when she came where Jesus was, and saw Him, fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."* (33) *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, (34) and said, "Where have ye laid him?" They say unto Him, "Lord, come and see."* (35) *Jesus wept. (36) The Jews therefore said, "Behold how He loved him!"* (37) *But some of them said, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?"* (38) *Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it. (39) Jesus saith, "Take ye away the stone."* *Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days."* (40) *Jesus saith unto her, "Said I not unto thee that if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God?"* (41) *So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me. (42) And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: but because of the multitude which standeth around I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send Me."* (43) *And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."* (44) *He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, "Loose him, and let him go."*

## THE LIFE AND THE RESURRECTION.\*

### BETHANY.

JESUS must have felt at the Feast of the Tabernacles that the end of His career was approaching. He retired from the capital, and passed across the Jordan into Perea, the territory of Herod Antipas.

The Bethany in Perea was about thirty miles from the Olivet Bethany, which is less than two miles from Jerusalem. While Jesus was carrying forward His work on the east of the Jordan, Lazarus sickened. Lazarus was the cherished friend of Jesus. Indeed, nowhere else in His history do we find Jesus enjoying the amenities of society in repose, and away from the glare of publicity which notable men of affairs must always endure, except in this Bethany household, which consisted of a busy, bustling elder sister, a gentle, thoughtful younger sister, and a quiet brother, probably the youngest of the three. Bethany was so near to Jerusalem that it presented Jesus a place of easy retreat, and it was so small and unimportant a village, lying nestled quietly on the mountain-side, containing no residence of official personage, whether civil or ecclesiastical, that it afforded a safe and happy escape from the bickerings and contentions of the excitable metropolis. Jesus had put Himself upon the footing of most respectful famil-

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\* This chapter is largely adapted from the author's "The Light of the Nations."

ilarity with this family, insomuch that Martha came to Him with her petty household cares, and the gentle Mary became His companion. These people were not desperately poor, but rather in moderately comfortable circumstances, seeing that they entertained company and were owners of a family burial-place.

When Lazarus sickened, the sisters dispatched a messenger to Jesus, saying simply: "Lord, behold he whom You love is sick." It was a request delicately imbedded in an expression of trustfulness, but there was no teasing urgency. When Jesus heard it, He said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." This was a declaration which showed that Jesus believed He could see the conclusion of this whole matter, and the results proved how correct it was. It was not merely an opinion of a case of sickness, expressed after hearing the symptoms from the messenger, but it was of the nature of a prediction. It gave the messenger comfort to carry to the sisters, which probably he immediately did.

#### REMAINING IN PEREA.

After receiving the message Jesus remained in Perea two days before He again alluded to the subject or made any change in His movements. He then said to His disciples: "Let us go into Judea." They recalled the painful scenes through which they had so lately passed with Him in Jerusalem, scenes which impressed them deeply with the feeling that the intentions of the ruling party were most malignant. They replied: "Rabbi, the Jews of late sought to stone You, and do You go there again?" His answer was: "Are there not twelve

hours in the day? If any one walk in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if any one walk in the night, he stumbles, because there is no light in him."

There is in these words not only a lofty truth as to the special mission of our Lord, but an important principle touching all human life. The disciples desired to prolong His life by keeping Him from His enemies. He did not desire to lose His life in any sense, either by having His career cut short by His foes, or by His own departure from the line of His rightful work. He held that if He should protract the years of His natural life by keeping out of the line of His work, because the peril of death lay therein, His life would be lost in a worse manner than if He were killed in doing His work at the right time and place. He should have outlived Himself, and thus have lost His life. Safety and happiness lie only in doing the assigned work, discharging the obvious duty. That is walking in the light. There is just so much of light and life, say "twelve hours." If a man fill those hours with the right work, he has gained life. If he omit, and then endeavor to go out in the night to work, he stumbles. To apply it to Himself: if His duty call Him to Bethany, thither He must go, even if the Jews kill Him; for staying away is stepping out of the light of duty into the night of selfishness. If Jesus do so, He can no longer accomplish any good in Perea, or Galilee, or elsewhere. He must walk in the day.

#### LAZARUS IS "SLEEPING."

He then said to them: "Lazarus, our friend, is sleeping; but I go that I may awake him." He knew that

Lazarus was lying dead, in the Bethany near Jerusalem. He desired to prepare the minds of His disciples for the dangerous journey, and so began to let them know the exact state of the case. They took His statement literally, and said: "Lord, if he sleep, he shall recover." But Jesus spoke of his death. In all languages sleep is represented as the image of death; but it comes with extraordinary beauty and force from the lips of Him who is going to arouse the sleeper. Then Jesus said to them plainly: "Lazarus is dead, and I am glad on your account that I was not there, that ye may believe; but let us go to him."

The history here inserts a little incident which is very beautiful, and which sheds light on a certain cast of character. Thomas, called Didymus, turned to his fellow-disciples and said very pathetically, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Thomas was an honest skeptic, a constitutional doubter, a desponding soul. He required the most grossly palpable proofs to win his belief. But he was true-hearted and brave when he did believe. And of just such stuff do we find a certain class of doubters and melancholy men in all ages. Lazarus was dead. Jesus was going to die. The circle was breaking. "Let us all go together," said this sad, brave man. His faith could not reach to the heights of his Master's predictions, but his fidelity made him ready to follow that Master unto the death.

Why Jesus should have delayed two days in Perea after receiving the message of Martha and Mary we can only conjecture, and scarcely any theory yet presented seems entirely satisfactory. He did not idle. He was

not endeavoring to while away time. In Perea He found plenty of work to do, and He chose to finish what had been so auspiciously begun. It is true that He might have left some disciples behind Him and have returned. But He did not intend to return. His career was coming to its close. Moreover, He was never hurried. He had that self-possession which, when conjoined with high intellectual and moral qualities, is the measure of true greatness. He knew what He could do, and what He would do. And then He had respect to those, His dearest friends, whose spiritual improvement was a ruling consideration in this matter. He was working for the good of men and for the glory of God. He neither loitered nor hurried.

#### JESUS RETURNS TO BETHANY.

When Jesus reached Bethany, He found that Lazarus had been already "four days in the tomb." It would seem that when the messenger was dispatched by the sisters, Lazarus was still living. Such their message implied. It was therefore satisfactory and consolatory to the messenger to hear Jesus say that that sickness was not unto death. He must have been greatly surprised when he returned and found Lazarus buried; and if he delivered the message to the sisters, they must have been sorely puzzled, for Lazarus had died in the meantime. This message must have seemed to them to show that Jesus had lost His way. He had said that this sickness was not unto death at the very moment when Lazarus was in his grave, for the Jews made haste to bury their dead out of their sight, and a prompt inter-

ment was intended to be an honor to the deceased. When this message came to Martha and Mary, it must have been a double blow. They had had such love for Lazarus, and such confidence in the power of Jesus ; and now Lazarus was dead and Jesus was mistaken, or, if not mistaken, He did not regard them enough to come and explain His dark sayings. So it seemed to them. Lazarus must have died the day the messenger left for Perea, and been buried before sundown. That journey occupied a day. Jesus spent two other days in Perea, and the fourth was given to the journey to Bethany ; so that when He arrived, it was the fourth day that the corpse of Lazarus had been in the grave.

The sorrow of this stricken family had called to them their neighboring friends, and also many Jews from Jerusalem, some undoubtedly sincerely sympathizing with these afflicted young women, others simply going through the ceremonies of condolence in a perfunctory manner, and others perhaps desirous of bringing back into the fold of orthodoxy these excellent women, who had been turned aside by the fascination and friendship of the young heresiarch of Nazareth. There was a crowd in the house. Martha, always busy and bustling, was in a position to hear of the approach of Jesus, and she hastened to meet Him. Mary was sitting quiet in the house. The traits of character in each came out under the new and exciting circumstance of the arrival of Jesus. Martha met Him first, and the words that burst from her lips indicate what had been the thoughts, and probably the sayings, of the sisters in His absence: "Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died!"



## MARTHA'S SPEECH.

This speech is a study. Martha had had ample opportunity to investigate the character of Jesus. She had seen Him both fatigued and rested; had noticed Him gazing in revery far into the air, or down the mountain-slope, as He sat before the door of her house; had heard Him when He was engaged in conversation with Lazarus or some of the disciples; had watched His intercourse with Mary; noticed, as only woman's quick eye can notice, all His movements about the house, His dress and address, His dispositions of Himself, His off-guard moods, His temper under provocation, and all those things which have been said to make a man cease to be a hero to his valet. The whole impression made upon her mind was that He was so holy as to have most intimate communion with God, such intimacy as gave Him most extraordinary power, such power as would have enabled Him even to push back death and keep her brother alive. But she did not know, it would seem, of the miracles He had wrought in far-off Galilee in restoring other persons to life, and did not imagine such a possibility as the resurrection of her brother. To Martha Jesus was a divine personage, but not Deity. To the saying, "If You had been here my brother had not died," she added, probably after a pause and a sob, "Even now I know that whatever You will ask of God, God will give to You." What she expected Him to ask of God is not apparent. She was in the tumult of a fresh and great bereavement, swayed by hopes and fears and griefs.

The spiritual elevation of every person who came

within the circle of His influence was manifestly the design of all that Jesus did and said. To give back her brother simply was merely to indulge Martha's natural desires for a season, leaving her still in great distress because her brother might be snatched from her again at any moment. Her suffering, in that case, would have been such as Wordsworth, in his fine poem of *Laodamia*, has described to have been that of his heroine when the shade of Protesilaus was restored to her for a brief time and then withdrawn. It was needful that Martha should so recover her brother that it would be impossible ever to lose him again, and thus become rooted with him in the element of the imperishable. Jesus proceeded not simply to restore her brother, but to furnish her with a remedy against all forms in which death could possibly assault humanity, bodily or spiritually.

Jesus said to her: "Your brother shall rise again!"

Martha replied: "I know that he shall rise again at the resurrection at the last day." It is to be noticed that she speaks of the resurrection as a doctrine currently received, and as including the restoration to life of all dead men, simply in virtue of their being men and being dead; and also that this was to be accomplished for all the race at the last day. As if she had said: "*Of course*, as he has shared the fate of all men in dying, he shall share the fate of all men in rising."

#### A PRODIGIOUS CLAIM.

But Jesus taught her another doctrine and advanced a most prodigious claim for Himself. He said: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes on Me,

even if he were dead, shall live; and every one who lives and believes in Me shall not ultimately die." He removes from the plane of natural causes both life and the resurrection, and declares that the power of both resides in Him; that He is the dynamical force of all forms of life; that without Him no one who is dead could possibly be restored; and that those who are alive and have connection with Him can not finally perish. He represents Himself as the fountain of soul-life and of the animal life that is in man. He is *the* life. He is Lifeness itself. If He bring Himself to bear upon the dead, they live. If He bring Himself to bear upon the living, so long, through the ages, as this remains, they are not able to die. He is the Resurrection for Lazarus, and He is the Life for Martha.

Upon this He appealed to her: "Do you believe this?"

Martha did not unequivocally express her faith in this startling and immense claim, but she did reply, "I have reached the belief that You are the Christ—the Anointed One—the Son of God that was to come into the world." It was a noble thing in her not to give hasty assent to what she could neither understand nor believe. Jesus had uttered something too deep for her, and then startled her by the sudden question, "Do you believe all this?" She could not say whether she did or not, because she was not sure that she quite apprehended the meaning; but she did believe that He was the Messiah, and was quite ready to say that much. If that meant what Jesus meant, then "Yes, Lord"; if not, then "Nay, Lord; not yet that much; but I have believed and do believe that You are the Messiah."

## MARY AND JESUS.

Having said this, she went her way and privately sought Mary, not choosing to let the Jews from Jerusalem know that Jesus was so near, for she must have known the intensity of the malignant hatred of the Jews towards Jesus. She said to Mary: "The Master is here, and calls for you." When Mary heard this, she arose quickly and came to Him. Jesus had not come to the house, nor indeed into the village, but was near, perhaps between the house and the burial-place. When the Jews who were in the house, and had been endeavoring to comfort her, saw Mary rise up hastily and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary reached Jesus, she fell at His feet—an act of homage which Martha had not paid, an expression of adoring love, perhaps brought suddenly from her by the recollection that she had been sitting in the house while her dear friend was so near. She exclaimed, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died." In the identity of this speech with that of Martha, both coming out in the great emotion of the first meeting, we see what had been the tenor of their conversation in the absence of the dear friend. It was the unfortunate absence which occasioned all their trouble. The confidence in Jesus of these two women, who were so different in temperament, is really affectingly beautiful.

The outburst of Mary stirred the hearts of the Jews who had come to mourn with her, and they wept. When Jesus saw this deep emotion, he was vehemently agitated. The language of the original history (John xi., 33)

intimates a complex mental condition, a combination of grief and anger, "He grew wroth in His spirit and disturbed Himself!" His sympathies were intense. He loved Mary. He could not endure to see her suffer so keenly. These were reasons for tears; but why should He be angry? That is not so easy to answer. Neither Mary nor the Jews had done any thing on this occasion to arouse His indignation. It is absurd to suppose that the mere death of Lazarus had produced this state of feeling, or that He had any regrets for His own absence when Lazarus died; because He knew that He was about to raise him from the dead, and He had said to His disciples that He was glad He was not present at the death, because He knew that it was for the glory of God. We can not very clearly discern good reason for His anger, but He *was* angry. It may be that an intense perception of all the wrong that sin was working in the race came upon Him, and the discords and jangles of the world broke on His sensitive soul with a force that excited Him violently. If this be not the explanation, we do not know what is; but it is quite clear that the historian describes Him as angered.

#### A LOFTY GRIEF.

He said, "Where have you laid him?" They replied, "Lord, come and see."

Jesus wept.

On the way to the sepulcher the company noticed that manly tears were silently flowing down the cheeks of Jesus, like a shower of soft rain after a thunder-clap. Something had angered Him. Now he was weeping. Some of the Jews said to others, "See how He loved

him." And then, recollecting the case of the blind man in Jerusalem, whom Jesus had restored to sight, they said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused even that this man should not have died?" It must be noticed that this remark shows that the restoration of the blind man had been settled as a fact in the popular opinion of Jerusalem. The spectators saw in Jesus unmistakable signs of affection for Lazarus. He had shown great power in the case of the blind man; did His ability to save stop at that limit? In that case He had been criticised for doing too much; here, for doing too little. The anger of Jesus rose again, and exploded in a groan rather than in a verbal reply to their foolish gainsaying.

They came to the tomb. It was a cave. A stone lay against it. Jesus said to them, "Take the stone away." Martha shrank from the exposure, and expostulated: "Lord, already he"—she said with instinctive shuddering and painful reluctance—"stinketh; for he has been buried four days." Here was a conflict between her faith in the friendly power of Jesus and her desponding disposition. She did not know that putrefaction had begun; the word "for" shows that she had merely inferred it from the length of time her brother had been in the tomb. Jesus reassured her. "Did I not say to you that if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?"

Then they removed the stone. Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the multitude which stand around I said this, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." This remarkable speech seems to be the utterance of a

sentiment of internal spiritual communion, and not a prayer in the form of petition, although Jesus did make such prayers. This was no "show-prayer." It was a Eucharist, a thanksgiving, such as was in His heart, and He chose to utter it that the people hearing it might believe that He was the Sent of God, the Christ, the Messiah, or at least perceived that He believed Himself to be such. The raising of the dead was the *experimentum crucis*, the final and indisputable test and proof of Messiahship. He accepted it as such. He had raised the dead at least twice before, in the cases of the daughter of the nobleman and the son of the Nain widow, but never under circumstances like these, in which the deceased was an adult, had been dead and buried now the fourth day, and spectators from Jerusalem, the seat of ecclesiastical authority and of enmity to Jesus, were present in a crowd sufficient to examine all the phenomena of the miracle, and to detect collusions and tricks. They were certain that Lazarus was dead. It could not have been an arrangement on the part of these young women and Jesus. His whole character was such that not only would He not have entered into any such arrangement, but if they had desired to glorify the great Teacher by getting up a pseudo-miracle, He would never for the sake of friendship have yielded Himself unwillingly to be part of such a scheme. Moreover, the grief of Martha and Mary, as well as that of Jesus, was not feigned. If it had been, the Jews, who had three days for observation, would have detected it. They were so thoroughly convinced of the death of Lazarus that they themselves wept with Mary and admired the tenderness of the friendship of Jesus.

## THE CRISIS OF JESUS.

It was the crisis of Jesus. He stood before the opened tomb, and, with a loud voice, cried, "Lazarus, come forth." Then he who had been dead came forth, in just such plight as corpses were customarily laid away in the grave, namely, with narrow strips of linen wrapped about each limb, so that while motion was obstructed it was not impracticable. So thorough was the restoration that he needed no aid to obey the command of Jesus, but walked forth into the presence of the assembly. Jesus simply said, "Loose him, and let him go." That is, take away whatever encumbers him and let him go home.

One can not fail to notice the absence of all parade and mumbling and incantation, as if this were the work of a magician. The history is beautiful on the side of the human passions, and sublime on the side of the simple exercise of power in doing what only God has always been supposed to be capable of performing. There is no indulgence of curiosity, no telling of tales brought back from the prison-house of the sepulcher, no marvels, no self-gratulation upon the part of Jesus, no sense of exhaustion, as if He had poured vital force from Himself into His dead friend. The veil is dropped over any conversation Jesus might have had with His dear friend, and the most delicate silence preserved as to the display of feeling upon the part of Lazarus and his sisters at his restoration, and any loving thanks they may have heaped upon their benefactor. Even tradition does not venture upon repeating to us any thing Lazarus may have been represented as saying of his sensations in



dying, his experience of being dead, and his emotion upon the return of the spirit to its seat in the body, and the reattachment of the cords of life which had been snapped. Tradition only tells us that Lazarus asked Jesus if he should die again, and when informed that there still lay before him the inevitable fate of humanity, he never smiled again. But there is no foundation for that. It is the unnatural fancy of some gloomy mind.

There is an old tradition in Epiphanius which tells us that Lazarus was thirty years old when the miracle was performed, and lived thirty years afterwards. Other legends recount that his bones were discovered in Cyprus, A.D. 890, and still another that, accompanied by Mary and Martha, Lazarus traveled to Provence in France and preached the Gospel in Marseilles. But a sort of providence in history has kept from succeeding ages any thing which could cheapen any one who was connected with the Christ.

History tells us nothing more of Lazarus. In the beginning of the second century many of those whom Jesus had both healed and raised from the dead were still alive, according to Quadratus and Eusebius (*H. E.*, iv., 3). From this great miracle the village of Bethany took the name of Lazarus, and to this day is called El-Azariyeh or Lazariyeh.

There are many in this day who say that if they could witness a real miracle they would become Christians. They are mistaken. There is no conceivable miracle more stupendous than the raising of Lazarus. Did it convert all beholders? No. It had various effects upon the crowd of spectators. It brought to Jesus those few

who had sufficient spiritual insight to perceive its immense meaning. It deepened the hostility of those who already hated Jesus. It simply amused others, who regarded the whole thing as a first-rate show. It accelerated the death of Jesus.

XIV.

The Christ Foretelling His Death.

## JOHN XII.

(20) Now there were certain Greeks among those that went up to worship at the feast: (21) these therefore came to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." (22) Philip cometh, and telleth Andrew: Andrew cometh, and Philip, and they tell Jesus. (23) And Jesus answereth them, saying, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. (24) Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. (25) He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (26) If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will the Father honor. (27) Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. (28) Father, glorify Thy name." There came therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (29) The multitude therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it had thundered: others said, "An angel hath spoken to Him." (30) Jesus answered and said, "This voice hath not come for My sake, but for your sakes. (31) Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (32) And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." (33) But this He said, signifying by what manner of death He should die. (34) The multitude therefore answered Him, "We have heard out of the law that the Christ abideth forever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" (35) Jesus therefore said unto them, "Yet a little while is the light among you. Walk while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not: and he that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. (36) While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light." These things spake Jesus, and He departed and hid Himself from them.

## THE CHRIST FORETELLING HIS DEATH.

### THE FIRST DAY IN THE LAST WEEK.

IT was the first day of the last week in the earthly life of Jesus. The resurrection of Lazarus had so excited the hatred of the enemies of Jesus that they were plotting how they might kill both Jesus and Lazarus, because by the resurrection of the latter many of the Jews were beginning to believe on Jesus. It was the Passover, a feast which brought great multitudes to the Holy City. Many people had witnessed the great miracle at Bethany, and the populace were greatly excited. As Jesus came toward the city they gathered about Him until there was a vast cortège, and they strewed branches of palm trees in the way and waved them in the air, and cried: "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord." The Messianic enthusiasm had reached its height. Surely, now there would be the inauguration of that kingdom which was to break the Roman power and grow into a universal and perpetual empire.

### GREEK DESIRE TO SEE JESUS.

Jesus went into the Temple, probably passing at once into the "Women's Court," where the treasury-boxes were. At this juncture, from the crowd which had surged up to the holy edifice came certain Hellenes to Philip, one of Christ's disciples. These Hellenes were

not Jews who lived in Greece or in Greek colonies, but were Gentiles, real Greeks, who are described by the phrase "among those who were accustomed to come up to worship at the feast."

Where these came from no man knows. All we can learn of them must be gathered from this passage. If they had been Greek Jews, another word would have been used. They were Gentiles, and had been heathen. Whether they had become proselytes of the gate, like Cornelius, we do not know, but it is probable they had. They plainly inherited the Greek temperament of intellectual activity. They had spiritual aspirations and spiritual insight. They had perceived that of the nations the Jews held the highest and purest form of faith. They had accustomed themselves to come up to the feast and enjoy the spiritual advantages of the occasion, as far as allowed, even although not permitted to partake of the Passover, because they were uncircumcised. This rubric of the Jewish ritual was one of the latest exhibitions of the growing narrowness of the Jewish Church. Eleazar, the son of Ananias, the high priest, was, according to Josephus, the author of the canon which forbade the priests to accept any sacrifice at the hands of any Gentile. And Josephus says this was one of those things which brought down Roman wrath on the Jews (*De Bello Jud.*, l. 2, c. 30).

These Greeks were intent upon learning all they could. The recent words of Jesus, and the Lazarus miracle, and the palm procession, seem to have conspired to bring them to the determination to have a personal interview with Jesus. They saw Philip. Philip and Andrew were the only Greek names among the apostles.

These Greeks may have learned that ; or the Greek lineage may have shown itself in the face of Philip ; or perhaps they discerned spiritually that he was the man to whom such request might be trustfully presented. They made known their desire very courteously : they would not intrude upon the great Teacher. Nor would Philip be rash in carrying their requests to his Master, who might not desire to have another straw added to the load He was already carrying. But upon consultation with Andrew it was determined that they could not take the responsibility of withholding this request. They told Jesus. They enjoyed the blessedness of bringing others to Jesus, and they immortalized themselves in history. "Tell Jesus," and He will resolve all mental and spiritual difficulties. "We wish to see Jesus !" The desire of the nations is to know a Jesus. He who dies without seeing Jesus misses the best sight of heaven and earth.

JESUS WISHES TO SEE THOSE WHO WISH TO  
SEE HIM.

Jesus had just wept over Jerusalem. Coming from Bethany to the City of the Great King, He had paused on the brow of Olivet to weep over Jerusalem, and amid sobs to utter His pathetic valedictory : "If thou hadst known—in this day—even thou—the things for peace ! But now they are hid from thine eyes !" Now the Gentiles turn to Him, and He turns toward the Gentiles.

Just where Jesus uttered the next words we can only conjecture. It seems probable that He came out to where the Greeks were : they could not come to Him ; it was not allowed. The words recorded were addressed, it would seem, to the disciples, in the presence of the

Greeks and of the multitude who witnessed the going of Jesus to these Gentiles. Did not the coming of the Gentiles to Him bring forcibly to His mind the fact that it was to be by His death that all nations should be brought to God, and that that death was imminent? Did He connect in His mind the coming of the men from the East at His birth with this coming of the men from the West at His death? Whether this was so or not, He is recorded as having said: "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified"; and He knew that the hour had come when the Son of Man was to be crucified. He proceeds to intimate how that glory was to come to Him.

We must bear in mind the great difficulty Jesus had in making His disciples take in the idea of His dying. Whatsoever made them more certain that He was the Messiah made them more certain that He could not die. They shared the opinions and feelings of all their people on this subject. So when Jesus made the announcement of His death, He prefaced it with His usual solemn introduction to a most important asseveration: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there shall My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor."

#### "WHAT SHALL I SAY?"

When Jesus had uttered these words, there seems to have come to Him one of those awful moments of spirit-



ual anguish which made much of what He suffered for our salvation. A great shudder passed through His frame, such as would pass through a ship struck by huge waves from opposite sides. As one has expressed it, it was the concurrence of the dread of death and the ardor of obedience. Yes, it was the clash of the human and divine which came from the union of the divine and human. "What shall I say?" He cried. He was having an experience which human language was wholly inadequate to express. There must have been something in it which quite transcended any thing which can be in any mere departure of a human spirit from a human body. It made even Him to think of avoiding it by some method of escape. Naturally Jesus would look to the God that was in Him. "Shall I say: 'Father, save Me from this hour'?" Then He was strong enough to reject such a suggestion, and He embodies His spiritual triumph in that prayer which is to be the petition of His followers in all seasons of trial: "Father, glorify Thy name!" Do that, and do then whatever may be necessary to accomplish that.

#### A VOICE WHICH JESUS KNEW.

A notable thing then occurred. A sound was heard. It seemed to be a voice from heaven. Three interpretations were given to it. Some said it thundered. Some said: "An angel has spoken to Him." Some said there were these words spoken: "And I have glorified and I will glorify." It is plain that all heard a sound.

Jesus recognized the voice. He told the dull and unbelieving multitude that the voice had not come for His sake, but for theirs. He does not discuss their

various interpretations. He corrects their supposition that the voice had come to assure His faith; it had come to rebuke their unbelief and want of spiritual insight. It settled the great controversy. He shouted as a warrior might on a field of battle when a movement had been made which insured victory: "Now! Now! *Now* is the damnation of this world! *Now* is the ruler of this world cast out!" The "world" is all that is opposed to the Christ's work of reconciliation. The victory to be won by His death was to be the condemnation of the judgments of the carnal intellect and the hostilities of the carnal heart. The devil, who leads these hostile forces, is to be cast out. The ruler of the unbelieving world is to lose his place as unbelievers yield to the overpowering evidence of the love of God furnished in Jesus.

Living He had drawn some, but His death was to crown His life and complete His power. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself."

XV.

**Divine Humility—Feet-Washing.**

## JOHN XIII.

(1) *Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.* (2) *And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,* (3) *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God,* (4) *riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and He took a towel, and girded Himself.* (5) *Then He poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.* (6) *So He cometh to Simon Peter. He said unto Him, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?"* (7) *Jesus answered and said unto him, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter."* (8) *Peter saith unto Him, "Thou shalt never wash my feet."* Jesus answered him, *"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me."* (9) *Simon Peter saith unto Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."* (10) *Jesus saith to him, "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."* (11) *For He knew him that should betray Him; therefore said He, "Ye are not all clean."* (12) *So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and sat down again, He said unto them, "Know ye what I have done to you?"* (13) *Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.* (14) *If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.* (15) *For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you.* (16) *Verily, verily, I say unto you, A slave is not greater than his master; neither is an apostle greater than He that sent him.* (17) *If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them."*

## DIVINE HUMILITY.

### THE LAST PASSOVER.

THE day came when Jesus had His last social intercourse and His last meal with His disciples. This most probably was Thursday evening, 6th of April, A.D. 30, the day before His crucifixion. In the history of this remarkable meal there is much in the four Evangelists to excite the critical instinct, but we are employed in these pages with what may cultivate our spiritual insight, and not in criticism upon the adjustment of the circumstances as related. We are specially interested in what John supplies to complete the narrative as given in the other gospels.

Jesus knew that His "hour" was approaching, so that whatever should be said to His disciples must be said promptly. John and Peter were sent by Him to prepare for the last Passover supper of His life. At His direction they went to a certain house. It is not known whose house: probably it was that of one of those described as disciples "*secretly*, for fear of the Jews." Evidently Jesus had looked forward with great interest to this feast. He said to the twelve, apparently just after they had entered the chamber: "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Perhaps this was said while they were standing, a part of the ceremonial which was observed by Jews to remind them of the first Passover, when they were

about to leave Egypt. John explains that speech as having sprung from the love of the Lord for His disciples.

And this is the first and last and most impressive lesson of the whole narrative. It is to be remembered that John was the intimate of Jesus and was one of the two who had been sent to prepare the guest-chamber for this occasion. Perhaps before He started Jesus told John that He so loved the little company of followers that He desired to eat with them once more. When, in his old age, the dear apostle wrote out this account, he recollected what the Lord had said, that He desired another occasion to manifest His affection.

#### HIS "OWN."

"His own"—how tender that is! Every thing belongs to Him, for He made it; every atom of matter, every animate thing, every human being. But His "own" amongst men must have some peculiar meaning. Who are in the circle of that phrase? Must they not be those who perceive in Jesus something that specially belongs to them? Sheep are sheep; but when a shepherd looks upon great flocks of sheep, which are his "own"? Are they not the sheep who, if they were rational, the moment they hear his voice, would say, "That is *my* shepherd"? As one such a sheep approached its shepherd would not the shepherd say in his heart, "That is *my* sheep"? In all ages those who have enough spiritual insight to connect them with Jesus are His "own." In the close of the canon of the Old Testament (Mal. iii.) we are told that those who feared the Lord often talked with one another about

Him, and that their words would be kept in perpetual remembrance by the Lord, who calls them His “jewels”: “They shall be *mine*,” saith the Lord. One’s “own” is what he *owns*, not simply what he possesses, but also that of which he *acknowledges* the possession. When Jesus loves, He acknowledges His beloved, and He loves to the end; to the perfection of love.

What a beauty, what a high, tender, marvelous beauty must have come into the countenance of Jesus as He said, probably as they were about to sit down, “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer : for I say unto you that I will not eat thereof until the time when it shall be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.” Whatever they may have understood by all that, it was plain that this was to be the last meal before some great crisis.

#### CAUSES OF STRIFE.

Each of the Twelve desired to sit next to Him. And here arose a conflict, springing, perhaps, from selfish ambition ; or may it have been an unwise exhibition of love ? The order of the seats is not known, only that it appears to have been settled that John was to be on one side of Jesus, “leaning on the bosom of Jesus,” and Judas on the other, “He that dips the hand with Me in the dish.” Oh, how unseemly was this strife at this last meal ! How the friends of the Saviour crucify Him in His inmost nature, while His foes are preparing to nail Him to the cross ! O Prince of Peace ! must Thou always see men wrangling and quarreling and fighting about Thee, and from professed love of Thee ?

Perhaps the mention of “the Kingdom of God ” may

have aroused their secular hopes of temporal dominion, and the old wish to be very prominent in the Messianic government may have become rampant at the intimation by the Lord that they were on the eve of some great crisis in His career. The order of sitting being settled, there arose another cause of strife. We must recall the conditions. In the Christ's time and country men wore sandals. However scrupulously a man may have made his toilet, including his bath, and however carefully he may have walked, when he came in, his feet would be so soiled that no meal could have been taken in comfort with the feet unwashed. It was the business of a host to see that the washing of the feet was attended to, which service was ordinarily performed by a slave. In the case before us the host seems to have neglected this point of Oriental etiquette. *Who should wash the feet of this company?* That was the question which agitated the circle. We must bear in mind that they were all stirred by feeling that they were on the very edge of a stupendous change in their affairs, and that each must take advantage of his relationship to Jesus to secure his own interests in whatever was next to take place. In coming to the table they strove to see who should be greatest. Now they are striving to see who shall avoid being the least.

#### AN IMMORTAL OBJECT-LESSON.

It was in this connection that Jesus gave His disciples the immortal object-lesson of the feet-washing. His state of mind is described by John.

1. He was alive with love. That was intensified by His feeling that He was about to depart this life. He



was penetrated by the thought that He was to endure an unspeakable affliction of suffering, of all which His disciples were ignorant. The burden that pressed Him and the terrible agony which confronted Him did not so center Himself in Himself as to make Him indifferent to the bereavement which was about to befall His disciples and friends. While He should be in heaven they would be "in the world," the world that hated Him and would hate them.

2. Then, the time was shortening. The devil had entered the heart of Judas Iscariot. There sat the traitor in the company of John and the others. He had made the bargain, and would lose little time in consummating it.

3. Jesus was sensible of holding all things in His hands. His Godhead had endowed Him with omnipotence and omniscience. He could do with power all that could be done with power, but there are some things which power can not do. It can not win the hearts of men. Nothing but love can do that. But there can be no conceivable behaviour, however mean it may seem, that can derogate from the dignity of any being, even from the omnipotent, if that deed proceed from love. Here was a case in which human comfort was involved; and, beyond that, circumstances had occasioned the need of a great moral lesson, a lesson on the learning of which depended the happiness of His own dear family of disciples, and of all those who should believe on His name through them.

What a stupendous contrast between the third and fourth verses of this chapter! He who had all things in His hands, who had created the world, who had come

out from God, and was about to return to God, proceeds to wash the feet of His disciples, not only those of John, who loved Him, but also those of Peter, who should deny Him, and of Judas, who should betray Him. What a sight for the angels, who had seen Him on His throne, who had been present when He created the physical universe, and who had been witnesses of His incarnation ! But in this new sight they perceive how condescending can be the love that is so divine, so constant, so immortal !

#### IMPRESSION ON THE DISCIPLES.

Who can imagine the impression made upon the startled apostles as their Master arises from the table ? What is He about to do ? Why does He lay aside His outer garments ? Before they can speak, with love's alacrity and a divine dignity He girds Himself, just as a slave would. If they could have conjectured what it was He was about to do, would not some one of the twelve men in the circle have offered at least to adjust the apron about His person and to bring the basin ? The towel, or apron, and the wash-bowl were there, being part of the usual furniture of the guest-chamber, and left there by the master of the house, who was necessarily absent, if he was the head of a household, because he was compelled to eat the Passover with his family.

With whom did Christ begin ? Shall this strife for pre-eminence be increased by the very lesson of humility He was about to teach them ? It was not John. If it had been, there would have been some delicate hint of it somewhere in the narrative. John's character was

of fine grain, upon the whole, while his organ of approbateness was largely developed. He does not ever let his readers forget that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. As this was an act of condescending service upon the part of Him who knew all things, and as His disciples would often review the events of that night as they passed down into old age, and would scrutinize every act and word, and inquire into the probable motives of those words and acts, would He not probably begin with either Peter, who should deny Him, or Judas, who should betray Him? Perhaps we should say that the first to be approached would be Judas. He was morally at the bottom of the line. The devil was in Judas. He who already, without provocation, for the price of a slave, had sold a Master so pure, so noble, so lovable, may have been capable of having his feet washed by Jesus without any scrupulous objection such as exploded from Peter, and without breaking down and falling before Jesus, and clasping His precious feet, and acknowledging the sin into which he had been betrayed, and imploring the compassion of his Lord. Judas had already effectually committed his crime; Peter had not.

If this conjecture be correct, then the other disciples must have looked on in silent astonishment at both Jesus and Judas, at the wonderful service performed by one and the sullen reception of such an exhibition of love by the other, for Judas had hitherto been held in high confidence. If Judas\* was the first, then most probably Peter was the second.

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\*After this passage was written I discovered that Chrysostom had conjectured that Judas was the first to be washed, and that he permitted it and was pleased to have Jesus humiliated. But let us not be too hard on Judas.

## PETER'S OUTBURST.

When Jesus reached Simon Peter, probably the next to Judas, that apostle could not contain himself. His impulsive nature broke loose, and he objected violently, as perhaps any one of the other disciples would have done. We should make the English order of words more nearly in accordance with the order in the Greek, and so bring out the striking contrasts, if we put the sentence in the form of an exclamation: "Lord, Thou washing my feet!" But in the original "my" follows "Thou," and the contrast is as great as thought and language can make it. "Thou," the Son of God, the Messiah, art "washing," bathing as a servant would do, "me," who am not worthy to associate in the lowest capacity with One whose shoe-latchet the great John Baptist was not worthy to unloose; and art washing not my face or my hands, but my "feet"! The emotion is all the more deeply intimated by its being in the form of a question, as if he would have said: "Think of it! Think of my submitting to it! What would be thought of a disciple who would let his Lord wash his soiled feet? Who ever heard of such a thing? No; it shall never be said that I was willing to allow that! Rather let me wash Thy feet!"

Was this a natural expression of reverence? Why not? Is it not just what the most reverential disciple would say amid these circumstances? Perhaps the tones were louder and the manner more impulsive than we should have had in Andrew or Philip, but the address itself seems very natural. Even now do not His disciples often have the same feeling? That I should live and

die for the Lord seems most proper, but that the Lord of Glory should lay aside the robes of His imperial majesty and take upon Him the form of a servant, and serve me and die for me, is sometimes almost more than my reverence will allow me to admit.

#### THE CHRIST'S ANSWER TO PETER.

But the answer to modern disciples is the answer which the Lord gave to Peter: "What I am doing thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." The scruples of Peter are allayed by three considerations.

1. What Jesus was doing was not merely the performance of actions visible to the natural eye, but also something having a deep spiritual meaning which does not come out at first. We are greatly in the dark. Our limitations are many. Our outlook is not large. We must always consider this when we are disposed to criticise the doings of our Lord and to refuse to do as He proposes.

2. What is not understood at present by the disciple shall afterward certainly become intelligible. Growing Christian experience, increased spiritual insight, the unfolding of events, will throw light upon much that is now dark. "Hereafter." When, after the washing, Jesus entered upon discourse, when He died upon the cross, when the Pentecostal outpouring came, then Peter understood it all. O the great "hereafter"! What hoards of treasures, what chests of medicine, what a series of revelations, it contains for us all! "Thou *shalt* know" should sustain us.

3. And then there is the consideration that Jesus is

doing it: "What *I* do." The fact that any thing is done by our Master ought to make us feel that it must be divinely appropriate, and that any criticism by any of His followers must be unspeakably impertinent.

Very mild was the reply of the gentle Master to the vehement outburst of His impetuous disciple. But it does not quite conquer his self-will. He reiterates his refusal and in still more peremptory tones. He seems to fling aside the suggestion of "hereafter." "Thou shalt never wash my feet: no, never," or, as in the original, "to the limit of time," so that "there can never come a *hereafter* to Thy washing of my feet." No more positive expression of refusal can be shaped in language, none can be conceived. Now we have in Peter an example of that "pride which apes humility." Is it real humility to put one's self above one's Lord and Master? But this is what every one does who does not perceive that true humility lies in instant and implicit obedience. This is what every man does who insists on washing his own feet. The Lord laid aside His robes of imperial majesty and stooped to wash our sins away and—we decline His service, as being too much to even think of, much more to accept!

#### PETER AND JUDAS.

There was a great difference between Peter and Judas, the difference between frailty of temperament and degeneration of character. Peter was impulsive, Judas was corrupt. The latter had allowed the accursed lust for gold—" *sacra auri fames* "—to eat his manhood out, as it will always do if allowed a lodgment. An irreligious and immoral ritualist, he had submitted to

the ceremonial, but had not received into his soul the sweetness of the Christly service. He had been washed, but had no part in Jesus. In front of that fact Jesus breaks down Peter's opposition by quietly saying to him : "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." If Peter had reflected a moment, that might have appeared to him to mean that he who does not accept Christ's Christly service is cut off from Christ. "Cut off from Christ?" Why, that opened to the eyes of Peter a hell-depth down which he dare not look. Better be in the heart of the infernal regions with Jesus than on the throne of the universe without Him. This speech appealed to the real love for Jesus, which was the most powerful passion in this rough man's heart, and Peter explodes again with "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." He clean takes back all his "No, never." He begins to perceive the spiritual meaning of the whole transaction, and this makes him feel the filthiness of the soil of sin which none but the Son of God can wash away. His conscience was unlike that of Judas, who reasoned from one good quality to entire justification of character ; from his faults Peter reasoned to a total condemnation of himself and the necessity of being spiritually washed all over.

But all that was incidental. Jesus did not dwell on it. He was not insisting on the mere *act* of *feet-washing*, nor raising it to a sacrament. The great lesson of the occasion was the spirit that prepares for *service in humility*. How small beside Jesus appeared that group of disciples who, being in the main good men, after all the teaching of Jesus, and all the influence of life with Jesus, were now under the power of the passion of am-

bition. He teaches them the lofty lesson of humble service. Should it not be called Godlike? Who is the most serviceable person in the universe? God : and He is the grandest. Who the most serviceable among men? Jesus : and He is the grandest. No service to humanity can disparage the dignity of God or of any man. There is no climbing without taking the lowest step. Jesus emptied Himself of all glory, and took upon Him the form of a servant and humbled Himself. *Wherefore* God has given Him a name which is above every name. And the name that shall stand next to His for all eternity will be that of the person who, next to Jesus, shall have stooped from the greatest height to the lowliest position, that he might serve men. And *all* names shall follow in order on that principle.

O beautiful Humility ! O ugly Self-seeking ! The Lord and Master washed His disciples' feet : what He has done for us it will be our greatest honor to do for one another. "If ye *know* these things, *happy* are ye if you *do* them."



XVI.

Jesus Consolator.

#### JOHN XIV.

(1) "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. (2) In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (15) If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, (17) even the Spirit of truth: whom the world can not receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you. (18) I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you. (19) Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me: because I live, ye shall live also. (20) In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. (21) He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him." (22) Judas (not Iscariot) saith unto Him, "Lord, what is come to pass that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" (23) Jesus answered and said unto him, "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. (24) He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. (25) These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. (26) But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. (27) Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful."

## JESUS CONSOLATOR.

### STILL AT THE SUPPER.

WE must remember that we are still at the supper. Judas had left. Jesus had told them that He was going away. Instead of founding some sort of ecclesiastical society, He left them one entreaty, namely, that they should love one another. Men should know that they were His disciples if they loved one another for His sake, and whenever they ate bread and drank wine together they should do it in remembrance of Him. Peter was puzzled at the intimation of His departure. So hard was it for those who loved Him to think of Him as going anywhere away from them, more especially as dying, that Peter actually offered to go wherever He went, and was met by the prediction that he would shortly deny his Lord.

The company had a sense of impending danger, and gathered from the words of Jesus that they were to go forth. So they examined their resources and told Jesus that there were two swords in the room. "Enough of this," said Jesus. What was the use of any little arsenal in the possession of a little company of Galileans as measured against the Roman power? He was not talking of any such childish resistance. He was simply striving to prepare their minds for His departure out of this world. We read this history in the illumination of subsequent events. These poor men, it must be remembered, were without any such aid. They were tossed

with trouble. Their best friend saw that and began to console them.

#### TEXT OF THE DISCOURSE: TROUBLE.

The text of His discourse was this: *The sore of the world is a trouble: the cure of a troubled heart is faith.*

How manifold are the causes of heart-trouble! But whenever and from whatever it may come, it sometimes presents the picture of the heart as a loose, unmanaged vessel on a rough sea driven about by strong and changing winds, a ship which needs anchorage; sometimes the picture is that of a sick man shaking with ague or tossed by convulsions. These poor disciples were like sick men aboard a frail and beaten bark.

Look at the causes of their troubles. They had forsaken all and devoted themselves to this new prophet. They had believed that this was He who should deliver Israel. They had seen Him exhibit superhuman power. They had heard Him speak as never man spake. They had associated with Him for three years. They had learned to love Him with a passion which made them willing to die for Him. They had felt that He was kingly in His very nature, and had cherished Messianic hopes which included the national deliverance. Each man of them regarded Jesus as his chief friend. The world would be empty and dark and objectless if Jesus were taken away. And now He seemed about to go.

And His departure was to be marked by the fall of one and the treachery of another of their company; and the kingdom they expected was not to be set up; and alone, and without His presence and aid, they were to cope with foes whose hatred of them and of Jesus was

increasing daily ; and the future of desolation and disappointment and dreariness confronted their spirits.

Then spake the Consoler. His very tones were tender. He had known what it was to have His heart troubled. He was acquainted with griefs. (See John xi., 33, and xiii., 21). He does not blame them for being troubled, but He points them to sources of consolation.

#### CONSOLATIONS.

The first and greatest is faith. The very mention of "heart" intimates that they will *feel* sorrow. It is of nature that they should ; but it is of the grace of faith that they should not allow any sorrow, of memory or of anticipation, to beat them down and so demoralize them as to unfit them for duty. "Let not *your* heart be troubled." Others might ; but they had the help of faith. "Ye believe in God and ye believe in Me" : that would save them in sorrow. See how He couples thought of Himself with thought of God. He who believes in God really and truly must believe in Jesus when he sees Him. Any man in Christendom who does not believe in Jesus can not believe thoroughly in God. That is a simple fact which goes a great way to confirm thoughtful men in the divinity of Jesus. The greatest proof that there is a God is not furnished by nature, but comes to man in the existence of such a personality as that of Jesus. The belief in God necessitates the belief in some one like Jesus ; and there is no accounting for Jesus without postulating the idea of an infinite, good God.

Those who believe in Jesus have both God *and* Jesus ; all that is in manhood, all that is in godhood. With such a helper and friend, how could they succumb to trouble ?

It is as if He had said, "Whosoever heart is troubled, let not yours be : ye are Mine : if I came all the way out of heaven to you at My incarnation, is not that proof that I will come to you whenever I am needed by you ?" He had taught them that the Father so loved the world as to give the Son, and the Son so loved the world as to come in the flesh for its redemption ; and incomprehensible as it was, it was true—that the Father and the Son never parted company. With such divine relationship the disciples of Jesus should never allow themselves to be overwhelmed. He was going to be absent from the field of physical vision, it is true ; but His disciples must learn that the departures of Jesus are as valuable to the world as the coming of Jesus, even as the sunsets are as useful to men as the sunrise.

#### THE ROOTS OF TROUBLE.

Then He went to the roots of their fearful troubles, which were ambition and a sense of desolation at the departure of Jesus, a feeling of homelessness, as though they were to be wanderers forever. "In My Father's house are many mansions." What comfort in this amplitude and permanence ! And that comfort remains for us to-day. Does a servant of the Lord find himself with great gifts working in some lonely poor little mission-field with scarcely enough to keep soul and body together, while a less gifted brother is an archbishop with tens of thousands of dollars annually for salary, let him not be torn in spirit. The realm of God is so large that there is room enough to furnish an empire to each of His followers. And here the disciples are in training and must often be in camps and tents amid

all the inconveniences of such a life. But each shall have his *mansion* there. The comfort is :

1. That each shall have his own house. Heaven would be a very undesirable place if each were to be huddled with all, and there could be no sense of ownness. Everlasting publicity would soon reduce heaven to an Inferno. In this world it is a dreadful state of circumstances which does not allow to each member of the family a place of retreat, be it ever so small, in which he may have his silent hour for self-culture.

2. His place will be fitted to each spirit. We can not secure that here. For my own part, I have never yet seen any house which would *entirely* suit me for a home. That which is the nearest approach to it is the house out of which poor Maximilian went to his doom in Mexico. But a week's residence, doubtless, would make suggestion of alterations to render it more convenient. But Jesus has gone to prepare your place and mine. He knows exactly what will suit us. An unincarnate God might never have known how to do this, but the Christ knows. It will be ours, and as we develop in eternity we may improve on it so that it will always suit us.

3. It will remain. Every home on earth passes away. In America especially homes are transitory. Among all my acquaintances, at this moment I can recall but one gentleman who is living in the house in which he was born. But the home which our Lord is now preparing will be "eternal in the heavens."

#### A WIDE HOPE.

There is a wide, general hope given to those who follow Jesus. It involves an important principle, which

is this: If we have desire for any thing in eternity which is not forbidden in the Holy Scriptures, we may *expect* it; and desire with expectation is what makes hope. "Too good to be true?" Why, the better any thing is the more likely it is to come to pass. Whatever shall be needful for your happiness there, you may be sure that you will find there. A little girl was much devoted to her toy of Noah's ark. One day she asked her mother with some solicitude whether she would have a Noah's ark in heaven. Her unwise mother was shocked at the idea, and exclaimed: "No, never; there are no such foolish things in heaven!" The natural answer of the child was: "Then I think I'd rather go to the other place." If the mother had believed what Jesus said, she would have taught the child that when she passed into the heavenly state, if she needed a Noah's ark to make her happy she would find it there. The Lord never disappoints His trusting followers.

Then there is a special hope granted, the hope of the preservation of each one's individuality: "for you." You will not soon be lost in a great swirl of beings. There will be no absorption into all "being." The perfection of the promise is that it holds out the hope of individual consciousness, the consciousness of individual happiness.

"I go." That was the main cause of their grief. But He assures His disciples that His going is as much for their good as His coming. Indeed, the coming would end in no good without the going. Good Friday should be as much of a spiritual festival as Christmas. The language of trust should be: "The Lord has come, and the Lord has gone; blessed be the name of the Lord!"



“I am coming.” This is speaking very emphatically. It unites the present with the future. If my friend makes a journey to bring me any thing, his very departure is a portion of the journey, and I should not be torn by the fact that he is going. He can not come back if he do not go. Jesus said, “I am coming,” not, “I will come.” As my friend goes farther and farther from me he telegraphs to me, “*I am coming back* in six weeks,” or “as soon as I can.” So, ever since that day in which the Lord was taken up out of the sight of His disciples He has been calling back to His people, “I am coming.” When they begin to be lonely and despondent, when they feel deserted and lost, they hear the voice of the Lord saying, “I am coming.”

#### THE TENDEREST SPEECH.

And then the tenderest thing which man or God can say to his beloved: “I will take you to myself”—not simply will allow you to come, but will embrace and draw you, “that where I am ye may be also.” As if He had said: “Is your love for Me so great that life is not worth living without Me? Let Me tell you that you are so dear to Me that heaven is not heaven without you. You need not fear that we shall be separated forever.” What larger, sweeter, more human and more divine comfort could His disciples desire or their Master give?

When Jesus told them that whither He went they knew, and also knew the way, there came an interruption. It was from that honest skeptic, Thomas. Peter had wanted to know *whither* his Master was going; Thomas wanted to know the *way*. It gave Jesus another

opportunity of saying what He had taught before, that He was the only way to the Father. This is one of the fundamental truths of Christianity: *there is no way to the Father except through Jesus*. The mention of the Father draws out Philip with his "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." And this gave Jesus another opportunity to assert His claim to being the very God and Father of Eternity, as Isaiah had called Him. "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." This is another fundamental truth of Christianity: *there is no God that is not in Jesus*. He who sees Jesus sees God; he who speaks to Jesus speaks to God. Every word of Jesus is a word of God (vs. 10). So true is this that He gives power to His disciples to do greater works than His miracles. The conversion of a soul is greater than raising a dead man. Moral works are greater than miracles, because the former are wrought in the indestructible plane of spirit, while the latter are concerned with perishable matter; the former are always beneficial, the latter may be punitive, as were the miracles in Egypt; the former are wrought by the divine power of truth moving the free-will of man, while the latter are simply the product of the exercise of the autocratic will of God. And the promise was fulfilled.

#### ANOTHER COMFORTER.

That He may fill up their cup of comfort, Jesus promises to His disciples another Comforter. Mark, it is not "another" in the sense of different, but in the sense of added. On the way to the heavenly mansions

they should have peace, love, power, the intercourse of prayer, the satisfaction of obedience, and an added Comforter. Jesus called Him "Paraclete," a name so full of the meaning of many things we need that we can not translate it by any one English word. But His blessed offices are indicated. (1.) He is spirit. Christ's bodily appearance can not remain on earth forever. If He stayed He could be but in one place at a time, and would be as much invisible to all His disciples who were not there as if He were in heaven. The Spirit remaineth and can be everywhere present, because He is spirit. (2.) He is teacher. He led the Apostles into the whole truth into which Jesus had given them some insight, and so the canon of the Scripture was made complete, so that not another thing is to be written for our instruction. He still abides with all who love and obey Jesus, and brings still increasing light out of the unalterable truth of sacred Scripture. (3.) He is to be an advocate. Advocate is Latin, Paraclete is Greek. Both mean the same thing, and when applied to an individual mean "one that is called to the side." If I have trouble in the courts, because I am not skilled in law I call to my side one who is competent to meet my opponent and to secure my rights under the law. And he comforts me by making me feel that he stands between me and harm, just as Jesus stood between His disciples and harm, and was their Paraclete. (4.) And He is Christ's advocate. He takes the things of the absent Jesus and shows them to me, and makes me see the claims of my Lord to my obedient love as I should not otherwise perceive them. (5.) His active presence among men should make a line of demarcation. "The

world," in the New Testament, embraces all those who do not yield to the Holy Spirit and devote themselves to Jesus. It has always been as it is now. There are those who can not receive what they do not perceive with their bodily senses. Jesus says they are agnostics. The gnostics, those who know spiritual things, are those who go for their knowledge to the highest and surest source, *consciousness*. "Ye know Him." Why? How? Have Christ's disciples any greater logical power than other men? No. Sometimes they do not have as much. But it does not require logical ability to know that of which I am conscious. All the arguments possible to thought could not make me believe that that did not exist of which I have positive consciousness. It may require an argument to prove to me that Socrates succumbed to hemlock, but I *know* when I have a toothache, because I am *conscious of the pain*. A man knows that he has life by his consciousness of living. "I believe in the Holy Ghost" as I believe in my life : in both cases my belief rests on my consciousness.

#### ANOTHER WORD OF SWEETNESS.

And the Christ added another word of sweetness : "I will not leave you orphans : I am coming to you." A child's father may go across the seas, but the child does not feel orphaned ; the father keeps writing, "*I am coming.*" He is not an orphan till his parent dies. Jesus says that His disciples are not orphans. He is visiting them. The Father is visiting them. The Holy Spirit keeps up their relationship with the Father. The world would see Him entering Peter's house, or Mary's, when He was in the flesh, but when departed,

as to His fleshly presence, the world could not see His visits to His disciples, but if they kept in loving obedience to Him, then the Father would love them. God can not keep from loving with a special love all those who love Jesus, because love begets love, and all who love Jesus love God. The Father's love leads Him to His children ; so, says Jesus, "if a man love Me he will keep My words : and My Father will love him : and *We* will come unto Him : and make Our abode with Him." "We," Father and Son, will abide with the disciple who has the Holy Spirit. This is the reply of Jesus to the question of Judas Thaddeus (Matt. x., 3) : "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us and not unto the world?"

It is to be noticed how the spiritual world revolves around Jesus. "Whatsoever ye shall ask *in My name* that will *I* do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing *in My name* I will do it" (vs. 13, 14). That is either the talk of a blabbering idiot or the language of the one Eternal God. When any thing is asked to promote what *He* wishes promoted, is asked for Himself, to be carried to Him, as my messenger brings to me what I send him for. It shall come. It can not be refused. And Jesus says *He* will do it, not that the Father will do it separate from the Son, but that He—Jesus—will be doing it, because the Father will be answering the prayer. The Son is the very glory of the Father. "I will pray the Father and He shall give you." Of course. Prayer is the real desire of the Spirit. What Jesus wishes God wishes. What God wishes God does.

And see in what arms of divine love the Master wraps

His disciples. The consummation of all is, "I am in the Father and ye in Me and I in you." Now, how can the heart of the disciple be torn? Distresses, strifes, imprisonments, losses, bereavements, will smite the sensibilities of the disciple for a season; but he will not be troubled. *He believes in God. He believes in Jesus.*

XVII.

The Vine and the Branches.

JOHN XV.

(1) *I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.* (2) *Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.* (3) *Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.* (4) *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me.* (5) *I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing.* (6) *If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.* (7) *If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* (8) *Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be My disciples.* (9) *Even as the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you: abide ye in My love.* (10) *If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.* (11) *These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled.* (12) *This is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.* (13) *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* (14) *Ye are My friends, if ye do the things which I command you.* (15) *No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known unto you.* (16) *Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.*



## THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

### THE SUPPER ENDED.

THE supper had ended. Judas Iscariot had gone. Jesus had delivered a most consoling address to His disciples, answering the questions of Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Philip, and Judas Thaddeus. And the whole company had sung perhaps a part or the whole of the Great Hallel, which comprised the 115th, the 116th, the 117th and the 118th Psalms. Jesus had said, "Arise, let us go hence."

Now, whether He lingered, with a sad reluctance to leave the room in which He was having His last meeting with His disciples, or had passed into the open air, to go through the city down to the Kedron Valley, we do not know. But His heart was full, and it seemed eager to relieve itself by giving utterance to such last words as could be spoken before His departure.

Various conjectures have been made as to what suggested the image which gave form to the opening of this immortal discourse. Some have supposed that probably a vine growing near the house had some of its branches brushed against the window by the night-wind; others, that the great vine carved over the golden gate of the Temple gave the suggestion; others, that Jesus and His disciples were walking through the vineyards and the sight of the vines led to the use of this figure. Quite as reasonable as any of these is the suggestion that

the fact that they had been drinking of the juice of the grape was sufficient to suggest the vine. But why beat about? Was not nature perpetually inspiring the speeches of the Master? And had not this figure been rendered venerable to the Old Testament? (Read Isaiah v., Jeremiah ii., Ezekiel xv. and xix., and Psalm lxxx.)

Throughout His teachings our Lord had been endeavoring to impress upon the minds of His followers the close connection between Himself and His "own." The "coin" showed property, the "sheep" both property and living interest, the "son" still greater closeness, living interest and kinship; and now the "vine" sets forth a real vital oneness between the Master and the disciples. The whole discourse is full of lessons, of promises, and of warnings.

#### THE DISCOURSE OF THE VINE.

The first statement is measurelessly broad. The universe is the vineyard. God the Father is the possessor of the vineyard, the planter of the vine, the trimmer of the branches, the owner of the fruit. In the universe He hath planted His Son as *the* Vine. So Jesus now asserts Himself to be. By Him all things exist. He is the one, onely Vine, *the* Vine, that which is the "true," the archetypal Vine, all others growing out of this Vine. All the worlds are clusters growing on this Vine. Every visible thing has come forth as a branch, a cluster, or a single grape, from this Vine. By it all things were made. For it all things exist. The visible has grown out of the invisible. There had been nothing seen if there had not first been something unseen. In

the beginning was the Word. The Word is the Vine. There was no fruit in the universe before the Vine.

Another lesson. There is not any thing which can take care of itself, not even the branches which grow in the Vine which God has planted. They must be cared for. The Vine gives the life: the Husbandman cares for the branches which spring into life from the sap of the Vine. Every thing would go to destruction if not attended to. That is a universal law governing all things that are made.

It follows that the Father's government of the world is a government of personal attention. We can not conceive the beginning of the universe without a Person, but we can conceive that some Infinite Person made the universe like a chronometer, wound up His mighty clock, and then let it run until it should run down, Himself meanwhile sitting apart in majestic indifference. But that is not the government of God. He pays personal attention to every branch on His Vine, just as any vine-dresser who is the owner of the vine.

#### THE CHRIST IS GOD'S ONLY VINE.

The great truth, central to all science, central to all philosophy, central to all religion, is this: *God's only Vine is Jesus Christ.* There is nothing in the universe but Himself and His Vine. There is nothing to care for but that which grows on this Vine. This Vine is simply God's substance, that which *stands under* everything. The common vine in our vineyards is a type of the constitution of the universe. On the vine are branches, some that bear fruit and some that do not.

Each one receives attention, and each is treated according to its character.

#### FRUITLESS BRANCHES.

1. There are those that do not bear fruit. The branch does not exist for itself, but for the grapes it may grow upon itself. It is of no use without fruit. Those things which do not bear fruit are those which are not producing that which they were created to produce. The moment they reach that point their existence is a superfluity. Whatever is fruitless is needless : whatever is needless is obstructive : whatever is obstructive should be removed. So the husbandman cuts off the fruitless branches. The law of the universe is to sweep away "*every* branch" "that beareth not fruit." The forces of nature, which means the energies of God in action, everywhere in matter vigorously work apart and together, to remove what has ceased to discharge its prescribed functions. The moment a man's spirit leaves his body, the very agencies which have been at work to repair that body turn in upon it and energetically exert themselves to "take away" that body, to remove it from its place in the world. If the skill of men shall contrive to preserve its semblance, it serves but to show what an impertinence a mummy is. So it is in society. When any civil or religious institution, any school or church, or court, or camp, or factory, or custom, ceases to discharge its ordained function, it is swept away.

#### FRUITFUL BRANCHES.

2. But there are branches that bring forth fruit. They also receive the attention of the Vine-Dresser.

Them He "purges." The microbes on the skin of the grape are harmful if they penetrate. They must be removed. All accretions, all superfluous products, all "suckers," all things that do not help to produce more fruitfulness, must be removed, and the husbandman carefully sees to their removal, by all necessary processes, however painful these would be to the vine, if the vine had human sensitiveness.

*Every process in nature is carried forward that every thing may increase in fruitfulness.* So is it in the spiritual world.

It has always been important that the distinction between *fruitfulness* and *usefulness* be maintained. It was never more important than in this day of extraordinary activity. The tendency is sometimes to misconceive the meanings of the words, and sometimes to confound the ideas represented by them, and generally to transpose their relations. Let us classify our ideas. A branch on a vine is "fruitful" in proportion as it bears (1) *grapes* that are (2) *good*; but the fruitfulness is *in itself*. A branch becomes "useful" in proportion (1) to the number of grapes it gives to the consumer, and (2) the quality of those grapes: for the usefulness is *toward others*. The usefulness is not the cause of the fruitfulness, because the branch can not be useful before it is fruitful: the fruitfulness is the cause of the usefulness. An unfruitful branch can not be useful.

Will the reader please go carefully over the preceding paragraph and transfer its ideas to the spiritual life? The Great Teacher does not talk of usefulness, but of fruitfulness. Young disciples are often inflamed with an ardent desire to be useful, and so exhaust themselves

in striving to be useful that they cease to be fruitful; and then their efforts come to naught. And sometimes older Christians are discouraged because they seem to be "doing" so little, while perhaps in their seclusion or even isolation the Holy Spirit is ripening them into a fruitage which must produce usefulness.

#### ABIDING IN HIM.

In the most excellent sense His disciples, Jesus declares, are the branches of that Vine which He is. Nothing could more distinctly indicate the intimacy between them than the figure here employed. Who can tell just where the branch begins? Who can tell just where the sap has left the cellular tissues of the vine and entered those of the branch?

"Ye are the branches," He said. And they had been "purged." One of the company of twelve had been cut off by a word which Jesus had spoken. They had all undergone a trimming process by all the words He had spoken to them. They were not perfect; no branch that is newly trimmed is; but they were in condition to bear much fruit. Now follows the most important exhortation: "Abide in Me." Observe that word translated "abide" occurs ten times in seven verses, being translated "continue" in the ninth verse.

What is it to remain or abide or continue in Him? The Master explains that: it is having the word of the Lord to abide in us. Certainly this can not mean a mere familiarity with the verbiage, the literal words in which He conveyed His thoughts. That may be a mere result of a retentive memory. The most accomplished liar I ever knew was so familiar with Hebrew Scripture

that he could quote the whole body of those writings in the original, and could give you chapter and verse for any phrase you might furnish in Hebrew. The preacher who was accustomed to quote more Scripture, also with chapter and verse, than any other man to whom I ever listened, acknowledged to me and others that he had always been a liar and a thief, and while I write this is under trial for an outrage on one of his female parishioners. In these cases the word of the Lord was merely hung up in the memory of the men and did not "dwell in them richly," as the Apostle recommended it should, and as it eminently did in that great preacher, Thomas Chalmers, who almost never quoted a passage of Scripture in his sermons, which are saturated with the word and Spirit of the Lord. Beware of *trusting* to mere memory of Bible passages. To abide in Christ we must have the relation of the branch to the vine, the sap of the one passing through and through the other. The Master furnishes the reason for this persistent remaining in Him.

#### REASONS FOR ABIDING.

1. There is no spontaneous goodness in a man, any more than there is grape-sap in a vine-branch, unless that sap be shot into the branch from the vine. The branch can not produce it "of itself" (vs. 4). No human being ever produces a good thought or word or deed without Christ. "Apart from Me ye can do nothing" (vs. 5). The whole physical, intellectual, spiritual organism of the branch may remain intact, yet when cut from the vine it loses the power to produce fruit.

2. For spiritual power the branch must abide in the Vine. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you," if the vital relation between the vine and the branches be maintained, "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (vs. 7). He had already told them (xiv., 13, 14) that if they should ask any thing *in His name*, He would do it. And He repeats this in xv., 16. Keeping vital connection with Christ produces *in us* such prayers as are proper, and secures answered prayers *for us*. In a proper spiritual state we shall not ask from frivolousness nor from selfishness. We shall ask only for those things which Jesus desires. Our approaches to the Father will be simply as errands from the Son. Take care that "In His Name" do not degenerate into a mere magical phrase with which to conjure.

3. Thus, and thus only, shall be secured to us branches that which is the object of our existence, namely, fullness and richness of fruitfulness (vs. 5, 8).

4. Thus, and thus only, shall we branches "continue in the love" of the Father and the Son. On the brink of departure Jesus speaks of what His feelings had been toward His disciples. He had loved them as He had loved Himself, which He thus expresses: "As the Father hath loved Me so have I loved you." His love for us, not our love for Him, is that in which He exhorts us to abide. There is no such deliciousness of existence for a human soul as the sense of dwelling in the certainty that it enjoys the personal love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. This inestimable privilege secures us that joy which our Lord enjoys. If we remain in His love, His joy will remain in us.



6. And thus we shall bring glory to God, the one object for which He lives being to fill the world with fruitfulness. For this He planted that Vine which is Jesus. To this the energies of the godhead are bent. Every single man who brings himself more and more nearly to the full and perfect discharge of all those functions for which he was intended does thus more and more justify the existence of himself and of God.

#### A TONIC.

It is worth while to administer a tonic to our desire to abide in Christ by considering the dreadful fate of those who do not. The possibility of falling from grace is most distinctly stated by our Lord in vs. 7: "If any one will not abide in Me." Here comes the difference between a vine-branch and a Christ-disciple. The latter has will-power. The branch may be torn from the vine, but no power in the universe can separate a disciple from Christ. But he may separate himself. If the branch could think and feel and will, it might refuse to receive the vine's sap. What would follow? Just what follows in the case of the disciple who does not will to keep open the spiritual avenues between himself and his Saviour.

1. It is "cast forth," shed from the vine. It may hang a little while, as a disciple may hang by church membership and external ceremonial, but at last it must drop away.

2. Then there is no more sap and it withers. It dries up. It can not bring forth another single grape.

3. Then it is gathered up with other dead things. That tremendous police-force in the material world,

which removes all matter which has come into a useless form, is paralleled in the spiritual world by what may be called resistless pneumatic dynamics, which Jesus calls "His angels." Here He is describing last things, and uses a change of tense which imparts great vividness to the picture. "If any one *shall not have* abided in Me he *has been* cast out like the branch, and *is* withered, and *they* (Christ's angel-forces) *gather* them together and *cast* them into the fire and *it burns*," not "*is burned*," but naturally, like the dead sweepings of a vineyard, a spirit out of Christ has an affinity for destruction. At the end of the grape harvest, how easy it is to consume the old long-dead branches that have fallen from the vine; but who has ever been able to burn a living branch on a living vine?

XVIII.

**The Consummate Consolation.**

## JOHN XVI.

(1) *These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be made to stumble. (2) They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God. (3) And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor Me. (4) But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, ye may remember them, how that I told you. And these things I said not unto you from the beginning, because I was with you. (5) But now I go unto Him that sent Me; and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou? (6) But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. (7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. (8) And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (9) of sin, because they believe not in Me; (10) of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more; (11) of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. (12) I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. (13) Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. (14) He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you. (15) All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He taketh of Mine, and shall declare it unto you.*

## CONSUMMATE CONSOLATION.

### FOREWARNING.

JESUS still lingered, striving to console the company of the disciples on whom had fallen the shadow of the impending bereavement. He knew what they would encounter because of their loyalty to Him and to the truth which He had taught them. No effect of the strain upon them was to be deplored except the possibility that it might cause them to fall away. It was very natural for the departing Master to consider that result, because it was very natural that that should be the effect on their minds. When a person of ordinary modesty finds himself holding views which are opposed by Church and State, the former regarding them as heretical and the latter holding them to be dangerous, what more natural than that he should suspect that after all he may be wrong, even if taught by the most gifted teacher?

So He told them in advance that both excommunication and martyrdom awaited them, the former from the Church and the latter from the State. They did not have the lessons of the ages. They did not know that the Wesleys, the Luthers, the Savonarolas, who were to be excommunicated by the Church, would do more for truth and man and God than all the archbishops and popes who remained behind them. They knew only the Jewish Church and its ecclesiastical authority. To

come under its ban was intolerable damnation. It might well shake their faith in their own convictions. So He forearmed by forewarning them.

It does seem inconceivable that any body of men, animated by any religion, could bring themselves to believe that in murdering a man for his beliefs they were actually so pleasing the Heavenly Father that He would accept the homicide as a sacrifice atoning for their own sins; yet we know that churchly fanaticism has set forth the doctrine that "he who sheds the blood of a heretic is equal to him who makes a sacrificial offering." But the Lord told them that it would come to pass, and He told them—what we can now see—that whatever plea in mitigation of their conduct may be made for religious persecutors, that conduct arises from lack of spiritual insight: "They have not known the Father, nor Me."

#### A VALEDICTORY.

After this warning He utters His valedictory: "Now I go to Him that sent Me." That was the knell of fate to them. There was a dead silence in the room. No man cared to know any thing further. Earlier they had had their questions; but if they were to be deprived of Him what use was there for any further interrogatory? Yes, a sorrow had fallen on them which excluded all interest in any other thing. He gone, all would be gone. Sorrow is often selfish. They made no account of the fact that He was returning to the Father. And He rather chided them for their silence. But He loved them and sought to comfort them with human tenderness and divine wisdom. "It is expedient—expedient

*for you*"; as if He would assure them that His going was no act of selfishness, but sprang as much from self-sacrifice as did His coming.

Looking back through the centuries, we can see how "expedient" for the whole world that Jesus should not have remained on the earth in the flesh. Fancy Him still alive in the flesh, a man eighteen hundred years old! What a monstrosity! If He remained in one place, say Jerusalem, He would as effectually have been absent from the great body of the human race as if He were in heaven. If He went to new places there would be difficulty in establishing His identity. His bodily presence would have ceased to be useful: and it is always "expedient" to be rid of the useless.

The comfort of the disciples immediately around was not to outweigh the work He was to do for the world. That work could not be finished if He stayed in the flesh upon earth. There are two verbs in vs. 7 to be noticed. That which is translated "go away" gives the proper meaning of the original, "depart," but that which is translated "depart" does not look back upon that which is left but upon that which is in advance. "It is expedient for you that I *depart*, for if I *depart* not the Paraclete will not come, but if I *go* I will send Him to you." That is what the world needs, the perpetual presence of that which can everywhere be present at all times, and this no material body can be; but a spirit may. The dispensation of spirit is the only assurance of the continuance of spiritual religion. The promise of the Paraclete is the supreme consolation, because He would do for the world that which no personal presence of any preachers or miracle-workers

could possibly do ; no, not even the Son of God, while in bodily presence.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORLD.

The great errors of the world are mistakes as to sin, as to righteousness, and as to judgment. The Holy Spirit would refute these errors. The verb which describes His work is very difficult to translate into our language. The common version has "reprove," which is very feeble. The revised version has "convince," which gives the meaning only partially. It is a term of logic and of law. It always involves the refutation of error by the presentation of truth. The prosecutor makes out his case by refuting the supposition that the accused is innocent, the advocate by refuting the supposition that the accused is guilty. The verb used here sometimes implies that process which shows *what* is the real question and what is true of the matter under discussion. The Master teaches that the Holy Spirit would convince and convict "the world" *of sin*.

#### SIN.

1. Men should be made to feel that there is such a thing as sin, willful violation of God's known laws springing from sinfulness in the human spirit. The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit will refute all such errors as teach that sin is a mere misfortune for which a man is to be pitied ; that sin is a mistake because it interferes with one's pleasures, and that whatever does not so interfere is not sin ; that sin is an inconvenience because it does not promote the greatest good of the greatest number, and that whatsoever would probably promote that good is



not sin. He will blow away these fallacies. He will prove to each man that he is a sinner and that each sin is a black fact in his history. He will make manifest to the conscience the exceeding sinfulness of sin, its indescribable horribleness, the absolute necessity of quitting sin and being cured of sinfulness. Without the aid of the Holy Spirit no man can establish this proposition by any logical process. Nor, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, can any man show another that a failure to believe in Christ is sin, *the* sin, the consummate sin, parent of all other sins, is a willful violation of a known law of God, springing from the sinfulness of man's nature. Millions of us know it now, but in each case in which this conviction holds us it is the direct work of the Holy Ghost.

It were a terrible thing to convict the world of sin and convince each man that he is a sinner and leave the matter there. The Holy Spirit does more.

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS.

2. The Paraclete establishes *righteousness*. He convinces men that there really is such a thing as righteousness, even as there is such a thing as sin; that it is not a dream but a reality. And that convincing is a work which no man can do for himself or his fellow-man; it can be produced in a human spirit only by some superior spirit. The ground of the conviction is the fact that Jesus Christ went from the cross and the grave back to discharge the functions of the Eternal God. Condemned and killed and buried as a most unrighteous person, as a highly guilty person, His exaltation to be a Prince and a Saviour refutes the world's verdict and

establishes the righteousness of Christ. When a man has a powerful and painful conviction of sin, he naturally looks toward God, remembering that his sin was a violation of the law of God. What is he to do in this case? If the Holy Spirit left him with the mere conviction that he was a sinner, he might give up the whole matter in despair; if not that, he would set about keeping the known laws of God in the future. But still there would remain the facts of his sinful acts, unless also he had been convinced that a failure to believe in Jesus the Christ was his greatest sinfulness. The Holy Spirit convinces each man that neither despair nor self-righteousness will bring salvation, but that as sin is unbelief in Jesus, so faith in His Son is that righteousness which God recognizes. Both *sin* and *righteousness* have reference to Christ.

#### JUDGMENT.

3. So has *judgment*. Jesus Christ is the Judge. It is He who declares what is right and what is wrong; it is He who declares who is guilty and who is innocent. He damns the devil, not the world. He had declared expressly that He had not been sent into the world to condemn [damn] the world, but that the world through Him might be saved (John iii., 17). Jesus knew that there was a personal devil. That settles it. Whatever men may conjecture, or surmise, or wish, the existence of a personal devil is a fact in the universe. Jesus calls him "prince of this world," the principal leader, commander, ruler of the forces of unbelief. He was the original apostle of unbelief. All who teach doubt are under his direction. Our Lord gives the

comprehensive designation of "this world" to all those who are not living a life of faith in Him. He had already said (John xii., 31): "The prince of this world shall be cast out." "This world" is the world of all those who cherish disbelief. To be an unbeliever is to be the subject of Satan. "The prince of this world" is simply the "master of the infidels." It was he that brought Jesus to the cross. The power of the cross has proved the destruction of Satan, since all who have trusted in the atonement made on the cross have been able to break Satan's bonds and serve the Righteous One: and no one else has. The point seems to be that as the chief and leading and most powerful of unbelievers Satan has been judged and condemned and cast out by the cross. The whole world of his followers have fallen under the same judgment. The Holy Spirit will show the world that Jesus Christ is the Judge of all the judges of the earth.

These three things the Holy Spirit was to do for "the world" in its relations to Jesus the Christ, and for eighteen centuries history has been showing the fulfillment of the promise.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE DISCIPLES.

But their Master taught the disciples that the Holy Spirit would do much for them and their followers. He should develop Christianity. He is "the Spirit of the truth." Those who become the disciples of Christ He shall continue to convince of the heinousness of sin, inculcating righteousness in them, and warning them that every thing is to be judged now, hereafter, and forever, by its relation to the cross of Jesus Christ.

He shall do more. He shall "guide them to the truth entire." "The truth" is what Jesus Christ taught for our salvation. It was promised that the Holy Spirit should bring all that to the disciples in its entirety; and this was partly done when the Holy Spirit dictated the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles; and further, when in their preaching they set forth the death of Jesus as the free, full, and perfect oblation and sacrifice for the sins of the world, and His resurrection as the fact justifying the faith of believers. And still the Holy Spirit leads those who become Christ's disciples, spiritually guiding them away from all error of life and doctrine to the saving truth which Jesus has set forth.

Certainly there is no promise here that the Holy Spirit should guide men into *every kind* of truth. Scientific truth must be sought by intellectual observance of phenomena, by intellectual comparison and judgment, by intellectual processes of induction. Even here it has been found that spiritual help comes to all who devoutly study stone or star; and many a scholar finds the deep truth of Luther's *orásse est studísse*—prayer is study. It is a remarkable fact that all the men who have made the greatest contribution to our scientific knowledge, like Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton, have been praying men, and have "thought the thoughts of God after Him," under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

But the most valuable element in this promise is the assurance that if a man truly and sincerely desires to learn the truth for his salvation, he will be infallibly led thereto by the Holy Spirit. Plainly this could not be

done by the continuance of Jesus Christ in the flesh, and herein we see how expedient it was that He should depart. The Holy Spirit does "not speak from Himself," as Jesus the Christ said: that is, He does not speak independently of the Father, just as Jesus had said of Himself that the words He spake He spake not independently of the Father. (See chapter vii., 16-18; viii., 26-28; xii., 49, 50.) There will be perfect unity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one: so shall their teachings be.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHRIST.

The third thing the Holy Spirit does is the glorifying of Christ. He does not glorify Himself, but He does glorify the Son. He brings no new truth, as the truth entire already exists. He simply takes the things of Christ and declares to the believer what they are. If any man profess to have a new, additional revelation, which differs from what Christ taught, he is deceived or he is an impostor if he set it forth as the product of the Holy Spirit. The revelation by the Holy Spirit is such a revelation as light makes. A whole library of richest books may be in a totally darkened room, and yet its very existence unknown; but let in the light, and then one not only sees the books, but sees how to read them. So the Holy Spirit shows us what is in Jesus the Christ.

No man, however gifted, can do these things. Whoever, therefore, brings any man under conviction of sin, of righteousness, of judgment, or gives him any saving view of Christ, does so by the Holy Ghost. HE is the only Real Preacher in the world. Whoever is used by the Holy Spirit for this work is in the only succession of

preachers acknowledged by the Holy Ghost, by the Only-Begotten Son, and by the Eternal Father.

And these three are one, not three Gods, but one God, so interpenetrating each the others, so closely one that they can not even think apart, any more than the body, the soul, the spirit of any man can think or feel apart. The Son glorifies the Father, the Spirit glorifies the Son; the revelation of the Father is by the Son, the revelation of the Son is by the Holy Ghost.

Is not this the Christ's thought of the Trinity as represented to us by the Holy Spirit?

And we are living under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, and have a right to expect and claim for ourselves all that our Master has promised in behalf of the Paraclete, the Advocate, the Comforter of all His disciples.

XIX.

**The Divine Soliloquy.**

## JOHN XVII.

(1) *These things spake Jesus ; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, " Father, the hour is come ; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee : (2) even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life. (3) And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ. (4) I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (5) And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. (6) I manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world : Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me ; and they have kept Thy word. (7) Now they know that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are from Thee : (8) for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given unto them ; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me. (9) I make request for them : I make not request for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me ; for they are Thine : (10) and all things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine : and I am glorified in them. (11) And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as we. (12) While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me : and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition ; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (13) But now I come to Thee ; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. (14) I have given them Thy word ; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (15) I make not request that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them out of the evil one. (16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (17) Consecrate them in the truth : Thy word is truth. (18) As Thou didst send Me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. (19) And for their sakes I consecrate Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."*



## A DIVINE SOLILOQUY.

### THE CHRIST TALKING TO HIMSELF.

THE night was growing on apace. Still in that upper chamber were Jesus and His disciples. Perhaps they had arisen in preparation for departure into the open air. What a scene! Eleven men stood gazing at a twelfth man, in whose countenance was the glow of the excitement of the speech He had just concluded, His farewell address to them, and it had ended in the triumphant note, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Then He prays. If this be prayer, it shows that prayer is not always petition. Here it is almost altogether communion with God. And it is soliloquy. He is talking with Himself. Throughout His career we find frequent mention of His having prayed with His disciples; and He had taught them how to pray. This was His last prayer with them. He could not go out into the night—the night of the Gethsemane agony; the night of the base betrayal, the dreadful denial, the fearful flagellation; the night of the thorn-crown, the judgment; the night preceding the day of the crucifixion, the day in which He was to perform the high-priestly function of making a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, without a service of prayer.

We may stand reverently near and listen; very rever-

ently, because we are permitted to look into the heart of God, by hearing God commune with Himself. We should learn much. The prayer, taken as a whole, must impress us with the value of communing with the Father, even when there are no petitions to be pressed.

#### FOR HIMSELF.

First of all He prays for Himself. He said: "Father, the hour has come." For God, as well as for man, in the line of duration stand out certain hours which mark crises, beginnings which shall end every thing that has gone before. In the biography of God there was the "hour" of the creation of angelic existences, an hour which closed that previous eternity, in which the Father, Son, and Spirit had communion, for then other existences began to be, and to share eternity with God. Another "hour" of God was when the corner-stone of the universe was laid, and the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job xxxviii.). Another "hour" of God was when the Son, the Father's Fellow, emptied Himself of all glory, and took on Himself the form of a servant, and as a woman's babe was found in fashion as a man. Now another "hour" had come, in which He was to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. ii.).

He prays that He Himself may be glorified. Twice, in divine tenderness, He says to the Father, "*Thy* Son." "Glorify *Thy* Son." The prayer seems to involve asking for the exercise of some moral and spiritual power on the part of the Father, which should give the universe to see that the Son was really a glorious person, although His age and generation had rejected Him and

hunted Him to death as a vile and noxious being, who should not be allowed to live among men. "Glorify" does not mean only to *bestow* glory, but, as here and elsewhere in Holy Scripture, to *reveal* glory.

The reason He assigns is that He may "glorify" the Father, may still further make men drop their prejudices and misconceptions of God, and learn from Jesus how holy, sweet, and lofty is the Father of the spirits of all flesh.

#### WHAT HE HAD DONE.

Then He states what He had done. It is important to notice that that is done in the second and fourth verses, which together make one sentence, being separate from the first verse and holding the third as a parenthesis. This is His statement of the definite motive which should bring the Son's glorification: "As Thou hast given Him authority over all mankind, in order that He might give eternal life to all them that Thou hast given Him, He has glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work Thou hast given Him to do." "All flesh" is a phrase in the Old Testament and the New to signify all mankind. (See Genesis vi., 3, 12, and Acts ii., 17.) Jesus felt that He had been sent into the world by the grace of the Father, to offer the gift of "eternal life" to all mankind, and He had done so, showing in His life and teachings the glorious, all-comprehending lovingness of God, and was about to finish His work, in "that He, by the grace of God, should (on the morrow) taste death for every man" (Hebrews ii., 9).

The parenthesis enters after the use of the phrase "eternal life," which He had said that He had been sent to give to all mankind, and is a corrective of any

misapprehension which might arise. What is this "life," this "æonian life," which we call in our tongue "eternal life"? Perhaps there has been a wide-spread mistake in regard to it. Perhaps it has generally implied to man's mind some relation of life with time. Is not that a mistake? Is not the meaning deeper and better than that of mere immortality, simple deathlessness? We feel sure that it is. The Son says to the Father: "In this consists eternal life, that they should know Thee as the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, the anointed Jesus."

#### ETERNAL LIFE.

This life, then, is subjective; it is in the character of the person, and not in the condition of time. It is a peculiar kind of "life," "eternal," or "æonian," namely, such as can be lived measurelessly in all ages, cycles, æons. A life of any other character may be lived under the limitations of time and place, but a life of this kind can unfold itself any *where* and *when*. Mere animal life is not of that kind; it is manifestly secular, which means having a time limit, depending on a physical organism, the disorganization of which closes the life.

Now, how is that eternal life secured, that life of eternity? By faithfully receiving and assimilating two truths, namely, that the Father is the one, the only, the true God, and so is Jesus the Christ, whom He hath anointed and sent to represent Him in the world. The human spirit which is so animated by this belief as to come into a real spiritual acquaintance with the Father and the Son can stand the wear and tear of all times

and all eternities. It does not comprehend this relationship, just as it does not comprehend the relationship of itself to its consciousness of itself; but it apprehends it, and is satisfied to rest thereon. It thus receives into itself an indestructible germ which shall develop itself in the character and develop the character in all directions endlessly; for such a spirit can never die.

Having brought this great gift of the life of eternity into the world of time, and so brought more glory to God than He did when He created the worlds, He prays that the Father and the Son may be glorified together in the work in which They had been united, and that He may return to that glory which He and the Father had when They existed together, but alone in the universe. How could He make it plainer that He believed Himself to be the Eternal God? Whatever does not bring glory to Jesus as God, brings Him no glory whatever. For if He be not now and forever God, must He not have been a very wicked man or a very crazy man? What fourth supposition is there?

#### FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

Having prayed for Himself, Jesus now prays for His disciples, who stood about in the spirit of heaviness and the attitude of devotion. His words show that wonderful interplay of thought and feeling whereby His oneness with the Eternal Father is wrought into hearts more than could be done by a mere dogmatic assertion. Thus He acknowledges His disciples as a gift from God the Father. They were the Father's, they are the Son's; they are the Son's because they are the Father's; what-

ever is the Son's is the Father's. The most delicate suggestion of oneness, or consciousness of oneness, of possession, of volitions, of action, so that man may never give any glory to the Son which does not equally belong to the Father, nor assign to the Father any thing which does not belong to the Son. We must not suppose for a moment that the Son has done any thing for our redemption which has not been done by the Father. It were a dreadful theology which should teach that the Son had wrested from the Father something the Father was unwilling to give, but which is indispensable for our salvation. The great work of the Son upon earth was to show the glory of the goodness of the Father.

So the first thing He says in regard to them is, that He had manifested the Father's name to these disciples. The name of the Most High God was ineffable, and had never been pronounced by the ancestors of these disciples, the people who had the revelations of Himself, which God had thitherto chosen to give the world. They wrote four letters to stand for it, but they could not say for what they stood. They did not know His name. Jesus the Christ came into the world to pronounce that name: and it was "FATHER." He had shown them who and what God is, that He is "Our Father"—that "God is love"; that God is such love as gives its only-begotten Son that its beloved human children should not perish but have eternal life. He had not simply told them this as a mere proposition; He had "manifested," had SHOWN, God in Himself, God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Cor. v., 19). Jesus the Christ was the heart of God turned inside out that the world might see its love. For a season Jesus concentrated

His whole sentimental being on these disciples, these "men," to the exclusion of angels and all other men, these men who were of God's chosen people, and whom He had prepared to receive the Christ. And this seems the substance of the prayer.

1. For their *preservation*. "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me." Here He does not address the Father as "righteous," as in vs. 25, but as "holy." Holiness is that lofty and tender lovingness of God which impels Him, who can not be touched by any defilement of evil or of sin, to lift His beloved out of the filth, and preserve them from the defilement of sin; the beauty of holiness is the condescension of its majesty. There can not be holiness without beauty and sweetness and helpfulness. (Read Isaiah xli., 14, and Psalms xxii., 4-7, and Isaiah vi., for the Old Testament idea of holiness.) As the prayer was for the preservation of the disciples by their representative, the Father is appropriately called "holy."

It is not a blind petition that omnipotence might be exerted to put the disciples, as it were, in a fortified place for preservation. That could not be done. Omnipotence can do only what can be done by power. Preservation in purity must be the result of some powerful internal influence which does not force the will. So the Lord said, "in Thy name," which makes the prayer signify that their preservation depends upon their remaining in that view of the nature and character of God which Jesus had revealed to them. Unless a man actually, thoroughly, and practically believes in God as Jesus revealed Him, he can not be kept from the evil that is in the world. Only truth is saving.

2. So Christ's second prayer for the disciples was that they should be kept one, kept in the unity of the doctrine of God which was revealed in Jesus, kept together by their trust in the teaching of Jesus that He was one with God, that all that belonged to God belonged to Him, and what was His was the Father's, who would care for it as His own, and that whoso had seen the Son had seen the Father, and therefore that the lovingness of Jesus toward them in life and death was an exhibition of the love of God. He had kept them in this while He was in the world, and now that He was departing He committed them to the Father.

3. But how small a benefit would an outward confession of orthodoxy, or even a visible confraternity, be if no more were accomplished by discipleship for the disciples. He prays for their inner sanctification, a consecration of the truth they had received from Jesus and were then holding. This part of the prayer seems an anticipation, or even a prediction, of Pentecost.

All these things might have happened if the disciples had been taken out of the world. But that was not the desire of the Master. The world greatly needed the men who held "the truth as it is in Jesus," and therefore Christ very emphatically added, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world." The lesson of this petition is that the highest thing which the Son could ask the Father to bestow upon the disciples was that which is adapted to practical life. Christians are to be in the world, but not of the world. Secluding one's self does not make one good. A man may be kept in solitary confinement, and live and die a criminal. Celibacy is a delusion, and solitude a snare. He that



can not be holy in a crowd can not be holy in a closet. The dark places of the earth wherein dwells cruelty may be nunneries and monasteries, in some of which there have been more staining sins than in the *salôns* of the cities and markets of the world. Christ held that it was more for the glory of the Father and the Son that the disciples should be kept from the evil than taken from the world.

#### PRAYER FOR THE WORLD.

Then follows His prayer for the world. He not only leaves His disciples in the world; He sends them out into the midst of all its dangers, that others might believe those things which He had taught them, especially His Deity and His consecration to the work of saving them. He prays for their unity, certainly not in the sense in which it is often put forward, not in any ecclesiastical sense whatever, for no teacher was ever removed further from ecclesiasticism than our Lord. As the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Paraclete is God, and yet there is but one God, so He prays that all Christians might be one in all the characteristics, powers, and privileges of those whose life is hid with Christ in God. As there is no destruction of the personality of the Father or of the Son in their oneness, so there is to be no suppression of personality of believers, no desire that there may be one visible organization, but an intense prayer that there may be preserved amongst them "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv., 3), so that their lives might be hid with Christ in God (Col. iii., 3), Christ being the connecting link with the Father: "I in them and Thou in Me."

The divine origin of Christianity finds its conclusive argument in the Christ-like life of Christians.

The conclusion of the prayer includes Christ and His immediate disciples, and all subsequent believers, that they might be together in the glorified estate to which He was about to ascend. Nothing can be conceived more tender than this prayer. It expresses our Lord's intense desire that all who love Him should be with Him, as heaven could scarcely be heaven to the divine Bridegroom without the sanctified bride. He does not ask it as for something that may be granted or refused. He speaks to His Father as not merely to His equal, but as to His own self. "I will that they also may be with Me." *The prayer of Jesus is the soliloquy of God.* When speaking of the preservation and sanctification of the disciples He had used the word "holy," a word philosophically and theologically and biblically appropriate as referring to God's helpfulness. Now He says "righteous Father," because it is simple justice that as on earth they had believed in His divinity, so in heaven they might have the reward of witnessing His glory He had had eternally, before He had made the worlds.

#### THE PRAYER FULFILLED.

And, so far as we can know or can see, up to this date the prayer of the Lord has been fulfilled. In the first place the apparent malefactor of eighteen centuries ago is the most glorious Person known in all history, is more revered and loved by more grand men and noble women and lovely children than any other man who has had a name among men. His disciples have had His prayer answered to them. Those who were about Him believed

in His divinity, shaped their lives on that faith, taught that truth by tongue and pen, and transmitted it to their followers, so that they have formed "a communion" of those whose fellowship has been with the Father and with the Son (1 John i.).

So may we now believe that in eternity the remainder of the prayer will be fulfilled to all who are kept by Christ in God's name (vs. 12), having received His words as God's words (vs. 6, 8), and having believed that whatever belongs to God the Father belongs to God the Son, and having been sanctified in this truth (vs. 17) by God the Holy Spirit (xvi., 13).

What a truth, what a fellowship, what a hope !

Fierce was the wild billow;  
Dark was the night;  
Oars labored heavily;  
Foam glimmered white;  
Mariners trembled;  
Peril was nigh;  
Then said the God of God,  
"Peace! It is I!"

Ridge of the mountain-wave,  
Lower thy crest!  
Wail of Euroclydon,  
Be thou at rest!  
Peril can none be,  
Sorrow must fly,  
When saith the Light of light,  
"Peace! It is I!"

Jesu, Deliverer!  
Come Thou to me;  
Soothe Thou my voyaging  
Over life's sea!  
Thou, when the storm of death  
Roars, sweeping by,  
Whisper, O Truth of truth!  
'Peace! It is I!"

—ST. ANATOLIUS.

*(Translated by John Mason Neale, 1862.)*

XX.

**Christus Vincit.**

## JOHN XVIII.

(1) *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, Himself and His disciples.* (2) *Now Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples.* (3) *Judas then, having received the band of soldiers, and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.* (4) *Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth, and saith unto them, "Whom seek ye?"* (5) *They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." Jesus saith unto them, "I am He." And Judas also, which betrayed Him, was standing with them.* (6) *When therefore He said unto them, "I am He," they went backward, and fell to the ground.* (7) *Again therefore He asked them, "Whom seek ye?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene."* (8) *Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He: if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way":* (9) *that the word might be fulfilled which He spake, "Of those whom Thou hast given Me I lost not one."* (10) *Simon Peter therefore having a sword drew it, and struck the high-priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. Now the servant's name was Malchus.* (11) *Jesus therefore said unto Peter, "Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"* (12) *So the band and the chief captain, and the officers of the Jews, seized Jesus and bound Him,* (13) *and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was high-priest that year.*

## THE GREAT BETRAYAL.

### REMARKABLE LITERATURE.

WHATEVER criticisms may be advanced on the Evangely as a whole, or on each Evangelist separately, or upon some isolated passages, it seems to me impossible that any man can read the first thirteen verses of the eighteenth chapter of John's gospel, together with the other incidents of the betrayal of Jesus, without feeling that here is a piece of composition in human language which quite surpasses all other things in human literature.

These men are writing about their Master in the most critical juncture of His life, when He whom they loved above father and mother, and wife and child, and lands and church and country, whom at first they had considered a great teacher and subsequently had regarded as a wonderful prophet and then had fairly worshiped as divine, and now had been taught by Himself that He Himself is very God, was patiently submitting to the plans of cunning and the outrages of brutality. On what known laws of thought and feeling can we account for the fact that these men, naturally destitute of the literary art, living in the narrowest kind of life, should produce so statuesque a representation of a human god or god-man as to surpass all the productions of all the other poets, from Homer to Tennyson? How can we account for their being able to do this without the betrayal of emo-

tion, when men of the most masterful will and strongest passions have burst into tears or curses as they have read the story of the betrayal of Christ ?

Let us, in this study, follow the line of John's narrative, bringing in the other incidents of the occasion as they are narrated by the other Evangelists.

#### WITHDRAWAL TO GETHSEMANE.

The prayer had closed in the upper chamber. It may be also that the sad company had sung another portion of the Great Hallel. Jesus had been accustomed to spend His nights out of the city, away from its tumult, probably at the house of His friends in Bethany. He must needs cross a valley down which in winter runs a stream called "Black Brook," but which is dry in summer. On the slope of Olivet, not far from the Kidron and the road to Bethany, was a garden called "The Garden of the Oil-Press"—Gethsemane—a name derived most probably from an oil-press belonging to the estate. It was a customary resort for Jesus and His disciples on their way to and from the city. Judas knew it.

It must be noticed that twice in the first verse of this chapter the phrase "with His disciples" is used. It points to a characteristic of Jesus, namely, His total lack of mysteriousness and of those airs and tricks always ascribed to pseudo-prophets and reformers. All cabbala, incantations, and movements of prestidigitation ascribed to soothsayers and founders of false religions are totally wanting in the life of Jesus. He never went where His disciples might not go. "He went forth *with* His disciples"; "He *and* His disciples entered."



Throughout the whole narrative of this tremendous transaction we notice how a tender regard for His disciples mingled with the most considerate prudence. He knew that Judas had gone to consummate his foul bargain with the wicked churchmen, who had no desire that Jesus should have a fair trial, but that He should be killed. Judas might at any time reappear accompanied by the other conspirators, and if they attempted to seize Jesus in that private house within the city boundaries there might be acts of violence which would produce a riot and endanger the disciples. So He quietly withdrew the disciples to this garden.

#### THE DIVINE AGONY.

Upon entering the garden a great heaviness fell upon Him. He said to His disciples, "Sit down and pray that you do not enter into temptation, while I go and pray yonder." He took with Him Peter and James and John. As they walked toward a more sheltered part of the garden, He began to show signs of terror and distress, so much so that His three friends probably spoke about it; and this led Him to say: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death: remain here and watch with Me." It was the vernal equinox, near midnight, and the moon, being two days from its full, would render objects visible in the cleared portions of the garden. As His mental anguish deepened, Jesus went into the deeper gloom of the garden, among the thicker growth of trees. There He kneeled down and fell on His face and prayed: "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me: yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt." How long He thus agonized we can not know. The

three disciples probably heard Him at the beginning; at least John heard this much of the prayer and has reported it. The august Sufferer also must have had some comfort from this communion with the Father, for after some time He returned to the three disciples and found them all asleep. The travel and excitement of the day had proved too much for them. They certainly did not comprehend the crisis which had come in the affairs of Jesus. He addressed Peter with the intensely pathetic appeal, "What, could you not watch with Me one hour? Rise, watch and pray, that you do not enter into temptation." Then, with compassionate thought of their human weaknesses, saying, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," He left His poor, heavy-eyed, and exhausted friends, and went back and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this may not pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done."

He came the second time to His disciples and found them all asleep. Down on His soul fell a great horror of desertion. It was past the midnight. Over the hill in Bethany, Lazarus and Martha and Mary, and perhaps His own mother, for she was at the feast, were sleeping. In front lay Jerusalem, the moon sailing on above and beyond the city, whose walls on this side grew darker from top to bottom; and within those walls they were plotting to destroy Him without fair trial. Judas had left Him on an errand that was to be disastrous. Here lay Peter, James, and John, asleep, near His scene of unspeakable anguish. There lay the other eight, asleep also. His country was under the Roman, whose garrison filled yonder tower of Antonia. The Church was arrayed against Him. His mother was away, and so was

Mary Magdalen, His sweet, pure, true friend. He was alone.

He staggered back and fell upon the ground, and the third time He prayed this prayer of exquisite pain and perfect submission. The horror of His position lay heavy on Him. In His agony He prayed more earnestly ; and His sweat was as it were clots of blood falling down to the ground, a phenomenon not confined to this case, the writer of these pages having known an instance. An angel appeared to Him and gave Him succor. In it all His godlike majesty never forsook Him. Now His human weakness was strengthened, and His serenity in some measure restored. Approaching His disciples, He said to them, "Sleep on now and rest." Afterward He suddenly said, "It is enough. Behold, the hour is here, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise; let us go. See, he that betrays Me is here!" And while He was speaking these words, Judas, who knew the place, and knew that it was a resort of Jesus and of His disciples, probably having sought Him in vain in the chamber where he had left Him, came upon the party. He was accompanied by a band of men whom he had received from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were not all Roman soldiers, but some were servants of the priests and some were members of the Sanhedrim. They had no official authority to do as they did. They were the minions of the Church party, who had united with the Roman soldiery to perpetrate this lawless outrage.

#### THE TREACHEROUS KISS.

It seems to have been prearranged that Judas was not to take any part in acts of violence toward Jesus,

but was simply to designate Him by a kiss. Probably this was the usual salutation which the disciples gave their Lord upon meeting. So Judas approached Jesus and kissed Him and said, in a tone which could be heard by the band, "Hail, Rabbi!" When he did so the simple majestic utterance of Jesus was, "Comrade, for what are you here? Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" It is to be noticed that Jesus did not use a word of endearment in calling Judas "Friend," when the traitor gave the kiss of betrayal. While it was not an unfriendly salutation, the word employed was not one of affection. It was merely the courteous word which a well-bred person uses, more from self-respect than from approval of the person addressed; as a gentleman of these days might begin his letter to a man whom he despised by the ordinary opening phrase of "Dear sir." So in Matt. xxii., 12, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having the wedding garment?" So also in Matt. xx., 13, where the employer says to the discontented laborer, "Friend, I do thee no wrong." The same word is used in all these passages. The questions of Jesus to Judas manifestly were not intended to solicit information, but to stir his conscience.

Jesus knew that all things were now coming upon Him, that His hour had arrived. He would neither hasten nor retard it. He advanced to the torch-bearing and armed company, and said, "Whom seek ye?" This movement shows that His death was voluntary, a point always to be kept in view; for if, without His own surrender, His life could have been taken, the whole mission of Jesus had been a failure and His claims become a nullity. To His question they replied, "Jesus

the Nazarene." It is to be noticed that "the Nazarene," not "of Nazareth," was the form the title took when it was desired to be specially contemptuous. But, undoubtedly, the designation of the place was intended to prejudice His case, as indicating that He came from that particularly turbulent town in turbulent Galilee. His reply is significant. In telling them that He was the person they sought He announced the name of Jehovah, "I am." It must have struck the Hebrews in the crowd; perhaps it intensified their hatred and their zeal for His destruction, as He gave Himself the name of the Most High God. And John stops to record that "Judas was standing with them." He was not standing with the party of loyal disciples; he was not standing with Jesus; he was standing *with them!* He was going to his own place.

#### THE DIVINE SELF-CONTROL.

What there was of majesty, innocence, and spiritual power in His presence and reply we may conjecture from the fact that though they were all armed, and were many, coming out against a man whose friends were few and unprepared for conflict, they staggered backwards and fell to the ground. Here was a Person capable of inspiring such awe, and yet never voluntarily, so far as we can perceive, putting forth any influence to serve or save Himself. He stood alone in that garden in the broad light of the full paschal moon, and the band of conspirators and ruffians who had come to take Him lay prone on the ground. He recalls them by asking a second time, "Whom seek ye?" And they made the same reply as before, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said

to them, "I have told you that I am He ; if, therefore, you seek Me, let these go away," so that His disciples might not suffer with Him. It would seem as if He had exerted His power over His enemies that His disciples, seeing it, might take heart enough at least to escape to a place of safety.

So, when the minions gathered courage to advance upon Jesus, the disciples had courage to resist, and said, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword ?" The impetuous Peter did not wait for reply, but immediately made a blow at the nearest man, who happened to be one Malchus, a slave of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear. The fact that Peter was not arrested, either at this moment or afterwards, when he was recognized by a relative of Malchus at the house of the high-priest, seems proof that this was an illegal seizure, otherwise Peter's resistance would have been "an act of rebellion by an armed force against a judicial order." Jesus healed the priest's servant with a touch. It was His latest miracle, a miracle of tenderness toward one who was a slave, and who was assisting to murder Him. And yet that did not soothe the rancor of His foes ! But it was Godlike !

He also restrained His disciples, who, under the awe which the presence of Jesus inspired in His persecutors, might have perhaps delivered Him. He said to Peter, "Return your sword into its place; for all who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Do you not think that I am able to pray unto My Father, and He shall forthwith give Me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it

must be? The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

He did not, however, forbear to let the multitude understand that He knew the illegality of what they were doing. "Have ye come out as against a thief, with swords and clubs, to take Me? I sat daily teaching in the Temple, and ye laid no hold upon Me. But this is the hour, and the power of darkness. All this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." It was a distinct intimation to the mob that He was suffering voluntarily, and quite as distinct an intimation to His disciples that He was going to suffer certainly. So they understood it, and forsook Him and fled.

Then "the officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him." *They* BOUND HIM! Never before nor since have men and angels seen a sight like that. There He stood meekly, He whom, with the Father, the angels had been accustomed to worship "before the world was"; He by whom the heavens and the earth had been made; He who had all power in heaven and upon earth, which He could have swept away at a breath—He stood and, for love's sake, permitted omnipotence to be bound. Such a picture of God no other painters have been able to draw. Beside the *Christus Vincitus* of the Evangelists, how feeble is the *Prometheus Vincitus* of Æschylus!

Jesus could have been legally arrested only by the Roman authorities. These people had no right to take Him, alone, unarmed, unresisting. But if they had had authority they should have taken Him to a Roman tribunal, instead of which they took Him to a private

house, the house of a bitter old churchman, who was prominent in the church party who compassed the slaughter of Jesus.

There began the extra-legal, unjust, outrageous prosecution of Jesus, which ended in the death of the sweetest, strongest, manliest, divinest Man that ever trod the earth, who perished as a malefactor, without any legal trial whatever.

We have not space to examine the ecclesiastical trial of Jesus before the high-priest. It was an extra-legal outrage, as most church trials have been. The author ventures to refer the reader to his "The Light of the Nations," pp. 636-644, for an examination of the ecclesiastical proceedings in this case. We must pass to His civil trial, mainly taken from that book.



XXI.

The Christ Suffering under Pontius Pilate;  
or, The Civil Trial of Jesus.

## JOHN XIX.

(1) *Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him.* (2) *And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and arrayed Him in a garment; and they came unto Him,* (3) *and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they struck Him with their hands.* (4) *And Pilate went out again, and saith unto them, "Behold, I bring Him out to you, that ye may know that I find no crime in Him."* (5) *Jesus therefore came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And Pilate saith unto them, "Behold the man!"* (6) *When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." Pilate saith unto them, "Take Him yourselves, and crucify Him: for I find no crime in Him."* (7) *The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."* (8) *When Pilate therefore heard this saying, he was the more afraid;* (9) *and he entered into the palace again, and saith unto Jesus, "Whence art Thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer.* (10) *Pilate therefore saith unto Him, "Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to release Thee, and have power to crucify Thee?"* (11) *Jesus answered him, "Thou wouldst have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath greater sin."* (12) *Upon this Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend: every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar."* (13) *When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment-seat at a place called the Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.* (14) *Now it was the preparation of the passover: it was about the sixth hour. And he saith unto the Jews, "Behold your King!"* (15) *They therefore cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him." Pilate saith unto them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Cæsar."* (16) *Then therefore he delivered Him unto them to be crucified.*

## UNDER PONTIUS PILATE.

### THE CIVIL TRIAL OF JESUS.

PALESTINE was a conquered province, regularly governed by the conquerors. A special procurator was appointed for Judea, and the office at this time was held by Pontius Pilate. The procurator ordinarily resided at Cæsarea, by the seaside, but usually came up with troops to attend the great festivals, partly for the enjoyment he might have amid the excitements, and partly because it was his duty to keep the Roman authority before the eyes of the Jews, and to be ready to repress any popular outbreak which would be likely to occur when so many people were assembled at the metropolis. During the six years in which he had held the office Pilate had incensed the Jews by his violence and oppression.

The Sanhedrim had no right to inflict capital punishment. Wherever Rome extended its dominion the *jus gladii*, the right of the sword, the power over life and death, was taken from the conquered. In the case of the Jews all minor matters were left in the hands of their Council, especially the settlement of all religious questions, but civil cases were tried by the procurator, and capital cases by the Præses. In this case it seems to have been deputed to the procurator. He was present in the city. It was the beginning of Friday. The Sabbath was to commence on the evening of that day. They had only that morning to secure the condemnation

and execution of Jesus. If delayed until the festival had passed, the whole country might be aroused, and a great reaction in His favor might set in. It was therefore determined to keep Him bound and guarded, and to assemble at daybreak and push their plans to consummation.

All the night long was Jesus buffeted, tortured, insulted. They would have killed Him if they had dared; but Rome looked down on them from the tower of Antonia and kept even churchly rage in check. Day began to dawn. The light was breaking over Olivet. The earliest movements must be made. The procurator must be seen as early as practicable. There was a re-assembling of the Sanhedrim. In the night session they had condemned Him: but beyond that they were powerless; they could not execute Him, and they could not see Pilate at that hour.

The object of the morning meeting was to concoct plans to have Him put to death, according to their verdict. This could be done only through Pilate. They prearranged their methods. They took Jesus bound, making as imposing a procession as possible; thus, as far as in them lay, prejudicing His case. The palace of Pilate had been desecrated in their eyes by having been the residence of a Gentile. These scrupulous officials, intent on a crime, compassing the destruction of a Man against whom they could prove nothing, although He had led a public life by the space of three years, were so cautious that they would not defile themselves by entering a Gentile's house! They forgot that the members of the Sanhedrim were bound to spend the day fasting in which they had condemned a man to death.

They sent in to Pilate, and he came out, as his custom was. Then commenced a play of passions on both sides, which constitutes a profoundly interesting study. He saw the crowd, the Council, the Prisoner. It was an unusual hour. It must be an unusual case. His quick eye interpreted the general meaning of the scene. Turning to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim, he said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"

It is not mere fancy, it is an exercise in insight, to strive to know what looks and gestures accompanied any speech of any historical character. It is well known how greatly these vary the sense of the mere words. If we could know precisely the motions of the person, the play of the lips, the glance of the eye of Jesus, how much more intelligible would His words be, and how our interpretation of them might be changed. And still more how we should be helped by a knowledge of the precise tone and emphasis He employed. The same is true of others, and here of Pilate. He may have looked at Jesus and seen Him pale and worn, yet calm as the morning in whose light He stood. He may have contrasted the face of the Prisoner, so free from passion, with the heated and fierce glare in the countenances of Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim, whose excitement and anger through the night must have left their traces; and Pilate may have uttered unfeigned surprise by the exclamatory question, "What accusation do *you* bring against *Him*?" as if intimating that if either party should be plaintiff it was Jesus.

Read with any emphasis, the question gave the churchmen plainly to understand that in this case Pilate did not intend to pronounce perfunctorily a confirma-

tion of any sentence they may have passed, ordering its execution without examination. Unfortunately for him he had in haste done such things before, and thus emboldened these men to venture in this case a presumption upon his judicial carelessness. He gave them to understand that he intended to take cognizance of this case. His question assumed, what the Sanhedrim knew to be true, that he had the right of original jurisdiction, as representative of the Roman emperor. This took them aback. They had not expected from Pilate such assertion of his rights. They expected of him simply the secular sanction to their ecclesiastical verdict. But Pilate took the bench, and put them on the stand of witnesses.

This touched their pride to the quick, while it seemed to intimate a miscarriage of their whole plan. Their arrogant reply was, "If He were not a malefactor we would not have delivered Him up to you." As if they resented the insult which was implied in his words, that they could have condemned an innocent man. But Pilate was as proud as Caiaphas. In reply to their claim to be judges, he said to the Jews, "Take Him, and judge Him according to your law." As if he had ironically said, "Oh, that is it! You do not vouchsafe to inform me even of the accusation against this man. You claim to be judges. You know your limit. I am sure that I am willing that you should try Him according to your law, and condemn Him, and punish Him as far as the law will permit. If you be judges, take the case away, and do not trouble me with it." This irony was stinging; but the Roman might become obstinate, and insist that the case remain with them, and they could not put

Jesus to death ; and so the whole scheme was like to miscarry.

This brought them to terms. They were obliged to submit the indictment. If they had had all power in their hands they would have stoned Him for blasphemy. It is noticeable that Jesus had predicted that His career would end in crucifixion, the Roman—rather than in stoning, the Hebrew—mode of execution. The probabilities had all been in favor of the latter. It was this sudden and unexpected obstinacy of Pilate which changed the current of affairs. For a moment they were in perplexity. To tell Pilate that Jesus had committed blasphemy, by claiming to be God's equal, would go for nothing. He had no interest in their religious questions : he was utterly a pagan. They changed their ground, and said, " We found this one perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a king." There are three counts in this allegation ; the first two being to the nation notoriously false, and the third being to Pilate merely ridiculous. Jesus had explicitly taught the people to " render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's " ; but the bare fact that such a question should have been brought to him is an indication of the unsettled state of the public mind, and how ready the people were to listen to any suggestions of rebellion. Caiaphas and his fellow-conspirators knew that, in the sense in which Pilate must have understood it, the third count was false. Jesus had aspired to no temporal rule, and had done nothing to make Himself a rival of Cæsar, but had simply claimed to be the Messiah, a claim in which the representative of the Roman emperor

could have no official, and scarcely any personal, interest.

But as the allegation had been made, the investigation must be had. Pilate went into the prætorium, so as to take his official position. The Roman trial was public. Any could enter. Jesus had no scruples, and when He was called went in at once. There were the representatives of the scrupulous churchmen present. If they could not go in, they could send in those who should watch and in some measure influence proceedings. Friends of Jesus might also enter and report to those outside.

Pilate said to Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Whether Pilate intended it or not, there was a trap in the question. It could not have a categorical answer. If Jesus said "Yes," to Pilate's manner of thought it might seem an acknowledgment of the charge of sedition they were making against Him. If He said "No," it would seem an abandonment of the Messianic claims He had already advanced. His reply to Pilate was a question: "Do you say this of yourself, or did others tell it you of Me?" To a man of the world like Pilate it should have shown that the person before him was not a crazy adventurer from the rural districts, whose claim to be Tiberius himself, if He had made it, would have been as harmless as any other utterance of wild insanity. It meant, "Do you put that question to Me in the Roman or the Jewish, in the political or the ecclesiastical, sense?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied rather petulantly. "Your own nation and the high-priest have delivered You to me. What have You done?"



But now He can approach an answer to Pilate which shall be consistent at once with His innocence and His claims. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews. My kingdom is not from hence." Here was a statement which implied that there was a kingdom whose defenders were not the Roman eagles. To an imperial official there seemed no kingdom that was not Roman. Or, if any other kingdom, it would draw sword but in vain, for it should soon succumb to Roman power. But the kingdom of Jesus was totally disengaged from secular governments, reigning under and over and through them, and would survive them, and did not need the defense of the sword. But a kingdom implied a king, and yet such a kingdom as Jesus had been describing seemed a mere vague idea ; so Pilate asked, "Are you not a king, then ?"

Now, Jesus had placed His judge in such a posture that the answer about to be given should not be deceptive : "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this purpose came I into the world, that I should bear witness concerning the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears My voice." It was the kingdom of truth, and not of physical power, in which He claimed to be supreme. Such a claim threatened no danger to the emperor : why, then, should Pilate care for it ? He had heard such things before. There were Greek and Roman philosophers who taught that those who lived by the truth were kings among men. And it seemed to Pilate that it was the same proposition he had heard often, now pronounced by a Jew. He did

not believe that men could reach the ultimate and absolute truth. It was a pretty fancy for poetic dreamers, a fine theory for recluses and philosophers, but there was nothing practical in it, nor useful to a man of affairs. It may have been with some bitterness of regret that such a search should be, as he believed, fruitless, that Pilate exclaimed with a sigh, "What is truth?" as he passed out to the portico to announce the acquittal of Jesus to the priests, which he did by saying, "I find no fault in Him."

Then the vehement Sanhedrim repeated their accusations. Jesus said not a word. The contrast between the raging churchmen and the meek heretic struck Pilate so forcibly that he appealed to Him: "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they witness against You." Jesus kept His silence. In the ecclesiastical and in the civil courts Jesus paid no attention to any thing that did not touch His claims to Messiahship. When that was involved He was perfectly explicit, giving His persecutors and His judges ample ground. On all else He was silent. He would perish in His claim to be the Son of God in a sense signifying that He was God's Equal. This self-control seemed marvelous to Pilate, who reiterated his judgment, saying, "I find no fault in this Man." But the crowd about the portico was fierce. However innocent Jesus might be, He had manifestly rendered Himself odious to the ecclesiastical rulers. It placed Pilate in a trying position. For all that appeared, he should have set Jesus free; but to do so peremptorily, before he had allayed the passionate excitement of the church party, would be to peril all

parties. His parley with the priests was in the interests of Jesus and justice.

But the rabid mob shouted : “ He stirs up the multitude throughout all Judæa, even beginning from Galilee to this place.” Here was a distinct charge of sedition ; but the naming of Galilee was an outlet for the perplexed Pilate. They mentioned it as a sinister circumstance that this Man’s ministry had begun among the turbulent Galilæans, in a country belonging to Herod, his political adversary. The shrewd Pilate saw in it a solution of his difficulty.

There had come a cloud between Herod and Pilate. Some of the turbulent subjects of the former had visited Jerusalem on a festival occasion, and created an insurrection which Pilate had suppressed by indiscriminate slaughter, not stopping to send them for trial to the courts in the dominion of Herod. This had made an estrangement between the rulers. Now the Galilæan king had come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pass-over. It would be a graceful recognition of Herod’s jurisdiction, and a compliment, to send this distinguished Prisoner to him for trial, and it would free Pilate from further proceedings. Therefore he sent Him to Herod. It did heal the quarrel ; but it did not relieve Pilate of the case.

When the frivolous Herod saw Jesus he was glad. There was not manliness enough in him to see that this was a most perplexing affair, in which the empire, his own tetrarchy, the weal of the Jewish people, and the interests of his ancestral religion, as well as the fate of a great and good man, might be involved. It was an

opportunity to have an exhibition of legerdemain or necromancy, and this incestuous assassin had no such weight on his seared conscience that he could not enjoy any species of entertainment. He catechized Jesus in many ways, endeavoring to draw Him at least into conversation. Jesus looked at him with that broad look which innocent manliness gives to a criminal. He could have spoken what would have riven Herod, but He was silent. The church party stood near, and were vehement and violent in their accusations; but not a word could be extorted from Jesus. He had never before met any man or woman or child to whom He would not speak. There never was a sinner so great that, with any expression of contrition, could not have a word from Jesus. *But Herod lived and died, probably the only man who, having seen Jesus, never heard the tones of His voice nor a syllable from His lips.*

Back to Pilate is Jesus now sent. We do not know whether Pilate was in the tower of Antonia, and Herod occupying the palace of his father, which is said to have exceeded the Temple in splendor, but in any case the distance was not great. The troubled procurator discovered that he had appeased Herod, but had not shifted the responsibility of this most perplexing case. When he saw Jesus brought back, wearing a robe of mockery, it plainly confirmed his suspicion that the accused was innocent. The greater part of His public life had been passed in the territory of Herod, who must have known the fact if Jesus had been a seditious person. His treatment of the prisoner plainly said that Herod regarded His kingly pretension as a harmless vagary, not fit to be treated seriously by any ruler.

Then Pilate called the Sanhedrim to him and addressed them thus: "You have brought this Man to me as one who perverts the people, a revolutionary demagogue. And see, I have examined Him in your presence, and have found no fault in this Man touching those things whereof you accuse Him. Neither did Herod, for he sent Him to us; and see, nothing deserving of death has been found in Him. I will scourge and release Him." Pilate, it would seem, had no feelings of malignity against Jesus. He was really desirous of releasing Him, while desirous at the same time of pleasing the Sanhedrim as far as practicable. He appeals to the fact that he had taken cognizance of the case; had heard the indictment; had openly conducted the trial in their presence, so that they could put in any proofs they thought likely to convict, and he had been willing to convict, and had shown his willingness by sending the prisoner to Herod, a native prince and a co-religionist of theirs, as the ruler in whose jurisdiction the most of the life of Jesus had been spent, and where, as they had alleged, Jesus had stirred up the people. No proof of seditious behavior had appeared. This Man might be a wild enthusiast, but He was not a dangerous revolutionist. He should therefore scourge Him and release Him.

In the meantime the ecclesiastical party were busy with the multitude, inciting them to violent demonstration. They had been telling the people that Jesus had blasphemed before the Sandedrim, the High Council of the nation, claiming to be Jehovah. It is always to be remembered that the people expected the Messiah to be a man, and not a God, not even an angel, certainly not

Jehovah. Blasphemy was the supreme crime in their code of ethics. It was because Jesus was a good man, such a very good man, and exercised such great moral power, that they regarded Him as about to be their Messiah. If, however, He had blasphemed in the presence of the elders of His people, He could be nothing to them but a deceiver. The passions of the mob were adroitly plied by these wily and bitter ecclesiastics, and they were prepared to show an outbreak of passionate reactionary feeling against Jesus.

Pilate does not seem to have calculated on this state of affairs when he resolved to appeal from the clergy to the laity, from the priests to the people. He must have known something of the personal popularity of the young Prophet, and hoped to be able to array the people against their rulers. For that purpose, apparently, he gathered them together, and when Pilate came before the mob they broke into the demand that he should comply with the custom which gave them any prisoner they might demand, no matter what his crime. It seems to have flashed upon Pilate as a bright idea. He could now turn this demand to the account of Jesus. He agreed that it was the custom, and that he was prepared to observe it, and then, that they might come to his aid against the priests, he fell upon another expedient. There lay in the prison at that moment a man named Barabbas, whose general notoriety as a robber had culminated in an act of sedition in the very metropolis, in which outbreak it was well known that he had committed murder. He had been tried and convicted for the very crime which had been charged on Jesus, namely, sedition. No one doubted the guilt of Barab-

bas, while no one could bring a particle of proof to fasten the charge on Jesus. The contrast was striking. Agreeing to observe the custom, he narrows the choice to a selection between Jesus and Barabbas, not having apparently the shadow of a doubt that the popular voice would at once release Jesus from His peril and Pilate from his perplexity.

To his utter astonishment the people preferred Barabbas.

Pilate could scarcely persuade himself that the people had made this choice. He was not much of a democrat. He could not have believed that most monstrous falsehood, *Vox populi vox Dei est*. But a few days before, the multitude had come trooping into Jerusalem, shouting pæans to this extraordinarily popular Prophet. They certainly could not now prefer Barabbas to Him, for Barabbas had made the highway dangerous and had been a common villain. Moreover, he had been condemned for that of which their leaders had accused Jesus. It is this which had made Pilate all along suspicious of the churchmen : they preferred a political charge against Jesus, while he knew that in their hearts they did not love the Roman yoke. But Pilate was giving way. He had already agreed to scourge an innocent man. They pushed him. They cried out "all at once." It was the roar of what Burke calls the *Bellua Populus*, that wild beast the People. It was becoming frightful. "Not this man!" "Away with this fellow!" "Release Barabbas to us!" What is the governor to do in this case? Jesus is charged with sedition, and the Jews are proving their loyalty to Rome by urging His destruction; but they are proving their disloyalty by demanding the

release of a man convicted of leading a seditious insurrection.

Standing on his judgment-seat, Pilate demanded: "What shall I do, then, with Jesus, who is called Christ, whom ye call King of the Jews?" "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" they exclaimed. A third time the governor interposed: "What evil has He done? Prove a capital crime. I have found no cause of death in Him. I will release Him, after having scourged Him." But that proposition did not pacify them. They cried out the more exceedingly, saying, with loud voices, "Let Him be crucified!" When the populace united with the priests Pilate gave way. He had shown a weakness of which the priests, who hated him, took advantage. Perhaps he reasoned thus: Things have reached such a pass that quiet can no more be restored without bloodshed. To release Jesus will not save Him from this furious mob, who will tear Him in pieces. An insurrection will be raised. I shall be compelled to call out the troops. Then several will perish. I shall have to give him up!

The weak ruler sent for a ewer of water, and standing in his place he washed his hands before them all, and again declared the innocence of Jesus, but by this symbolic act endeavored to throw all responsibility from himself, saying to the mob, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. But see you to it!" The infuriated multitude answered: "His blood be on us and on our children!" Then, deceiving himself and drugging his conscience, Pilate consented to their demand, and released Barabbas to them.

Then Pilate caused Jesus to be scourged. The Roman scourging surpassed the Hebrew in all the particulars of



severity. In the latter only the shoulders were bared ; in the former the whole person: in the latter the stripes were limited to forty, save one; in the former there was no limit. It was the punishment given to a slave. The stripes of the lash were loaded with bones or metallic fragments. The scourging of those who were to be crucified was so frightful that the condemned frequently escaped the cross by dying under the thongs.

Then the soldiers of Pilate took Jesus away into the common hall, called the Prætorium, probably in the castle of Antonia, and gathered the whole company of the guard, which usually numbered about four hundred men. They stripped Him again, and on His torn and bleeding shoulders put a scarlet robe, probably some old military coat from the wardrobe of the guardroom. Then they plaited a crown from the twigs of some thorny growth. It may have been the Syrian acacia, the thorns of which are as long as an ordinary finger. The more painful as well as humiliating the instrument of their mockery, the more acceptable it would be. Then they put a reed in His hand as a mock scepter. Then they knelt before Him and ridiculed Him and His nation, saying: "Hail! King of the Jews." And they spat on Him. He was bound. The reed was laid in His hands, but He did not hold it. He was perfectly passive. It fell. Some of the guard seized it, and with it drove the thorn-crown down upon His head. They smote and mocked Him, varying their indignities.

Pilate looked on this wild scene. We can conjecture his thoughts from his actions. He must have regarded this whole affair with mingled feelings of perplexity, awe, and apprehension. He had never seen such a sufferer.

Most majestic amid ridicule, most serene amid tortures, here was a man fit to be king anywhere. Yet He had not sought to use His marvelous personal influence for personal advancement. There was Barabbas, coarse and brutal, being the vilest kind of person and doing the very things which the priests had charged upon Jesus. If being seditious was such a heinous crime in their eyes, why should they not desire the destruction of Barabbas, who had been convicted of repeated acts under circumstances of great aggravation, and why should they desire the destruction of Jesus, who was charged with sedition, but against whom there was proved no single seditious word or act? It was a great puzzle. Some other basis than loyalty to Rome lay under this extraordinary zeal of the priests. Pilate determined to make one more effort to save the life of this wonderful Sufferer.

Taking Jesus, thorn-crowned, covered about with the old robe that burlesqued royalty, faint, worn, haggard, as He must have been after the night and morning of agony and torture, he placed the Prisoner once more before the people, reasserting his conviction of the innocence of Jesus. He pointed to this weak and apparently helpless man. He showed how lonely and friendless and powerless He seemed. Jerusalem should be too magnanimous, and Rome too lofty, to crush out this poor peasant-prophet for fear He should become too strong for Church and State. He said to them: "*Ecce Homo!*" "Behold the man." As if he had said: "Can *that* be a dangerous person?" It was a pathetic appeal. Even Pilate's voice may have been unsteady in making this utterance. But the Church hate was not to be touched. Jesus was to be destroyed. "Crucify Him! Crucify

Him ! Give Him the extreme punishment of a slave," they cried. Pilate said : "Take you Him and crucify Him ; for I find no fault in Him."

The crafty priests, determined, if possible, to make Pilate a tool in their hands by inducing him to acknowledge their verdict, making him thus not a judge in a court of original jurisdiction, but a mere recorder of their authoritative decisions, said to Pilate: "We have a law, and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." What definite idea this last phrase conveyed to the mind of pagan Pilate we can not tell, but the whole statement made his soul afraid. He was growing weaker and more superstitious. He went back into the judgment-hall and sent for Jesus, and said to Him: "Whence are You?" The wonderful Prisoner, who had uttered no complaint, and showed no nervousness, and seemed to take less interest in the whole tragedy than any spectator, held His peace. "What!" said Pilate, "do You not speak to *me*? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered: "You could have no power against Me, unless it were given you from above; on this account he who has delivered Me to you has the greater sin." In the judgment of Jesus, Caiaphas is worse than Pilate.

All this increased in Pilate a desire to release Jesus. The Prisoner was guilty of no crime, was apparently capable of no disturbance, had no marks of wickedness in His history or His manners, had been very popular with the masses in the rural districts, had displayed the most extraordinary composure during a period of extraordinary peril, had the reputation of a miracle-worker,

had excited the dreams of Pilate's wife, had called Himself the Son of God, and was manifestly the object of intense hatred on the part of the priesthood. Again Pilate sought to release Jesus. But the churchmen had kept their strongest form of argument for their last. They returned to the political aspect of the affair, and put it before Pilate thus: "If you release this man you are not Cæsar's friend: whoever makes himself a king speaks against Cæsar."

The phrase "Cæsar's friend," *Amicus Cæsaris*, had not only the ordinary signification of the words, but was a title of honor which the emperors were accustomed to bestow upon their representatives ruling over subjugated peoples. It was a most ingenious way of putting the case. It struck Pilate on his weakest side. He was a lover of place, an office-seeker, who considered the loss of his political position as the greatest misfortune, as is shown in the fact that when that did befall him he retired to Gaul and committed suicide. The priests knew their man, and Pilate knew how insecurely already he held his seat, and that such an accusation, if pressed with show of evidence, would be his ruin at Rome. Tiberius was suspicious. Pilate had been closeted with Jesus. The trial had been informal. They now had much to show. If he had only taken the strong and dignified position which became an Imperial Procurator, and released Jesus as soon as he was convinced that He was innocent, and began to feel perhaps that He was divine, Pilate would have saved himself; but he had vacillated so long and grown so weak that this last push toppled him from all his intellectual and moral proprieties. He fell.

Jesus was brought forth and placed in the judgment-seat, in what was called the Pavement, from the tessellated pavement in front of the judge, and in Hebrew Gabbatha, the etymology of which is not quite clear. The formal ceremonials of a trial were now resumed. Pilate was going to condemn Jesus; but, enraged at the defeat of his efforts to release Him, he called the attention of the Jewish leaders to the pale and poor prisoner at the bar, and said in derision: "Behold your King!" But they called out, "Away, away, crucify Him!" Still taunting them, knowing that by pronouncing the sentence he should be secure at Rome, and venting his rage on them, he said: "Shall I crucify your King?" They answered: "We have no king but Cæsar!"

It was the shriek of a dying nationality. Their earliest ancestors had lived under a theocracy whose King had held court in a pillar of flame and on the top of rocking Sinai. They had had no king but Jehovah. Their descendants had had such kings as the great David and the super-splendid Solomon. This very generation of men, who were howling around a pagan court-house to secure the condemnation of Jesus, had had hopes of a theocratic Messiah. But their thirst for innocent blood was uncontrollable. They threw up all hopes of the future as they did all traditions of the past. They lifted the casket that contained the treasure of their nationality and flung it into the maelstrom of the Roman dominion. "We have no king but Cæsar!" The nationality of Abraham and David and Solomon and the Maccabees was surrendered in spirit, as it had been captured in form, to an imperialism whose representative was the dark, suspicious, cruel, and debased

Tiberius. "We have no king but Cæsar!" Judaism's "loyalty" was Judaism's doom. So perishes every church and people and man that will "have no king but Cæsar."

Then Pilate sealed their fate and his own by delivering Jesus to be crucified. What the precise form of sentence was in this case we can not now know. The usual formula was, *Ibis ad crucem*, "Go to the cross."

XXII.

**Earth's Greatest Tragedy.**

## JOHN XIX.

(17) *They took Jesus therefore: and He went out, bearing the cross for Himself, unto the place called The place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha:* (18) *where they crucified Him, and with Him two others, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.* (19) *And Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross. And there was written, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS."* (20) *This title therefore read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek.* (21) *The chief priests of the Jews therefore said to Pilate, "Write not, 'The King of the Jews'; but, that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"* (22) *Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."* (23) *The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also the coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.* (24) *They said therefore one to another, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be": that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, "They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots."* *These things therefore the soldiers did.* (25) *But there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.* (26) *When Jesus therefore saw His mother and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, "Woman, behold thy son!"* (27) *Then saith He to the disciple, "Behold thy mother!"* *And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.* (28) *After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the Scripture might be accomplished, saith, "I thirst."* (29) *There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to His mouth.* (30) *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished": and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.*



## EARTH'S GREATEST TRAGEDY.

### CALVARY.

AS the trial of Jesus was altogether the most important that ever occurred in the courts of this world, so the execution of His sentence was the most tremendous event that ever came into the history of mankind.

*Ibis ad crucem*, "Go to the cross," said Pilate, when his weakness had succumbed to the persistent malice of our Lord's persecutors. That was the usual form of the Roman sentence. As a condemned malefactor Jesus had no defense from any indignities any man might choose to heap upon Him. When the servants of the priests and of Pilate had satisfied themselves with their cruel sport, they led Him away for crucifixion.

It was a part of the punishment that the convicted should bear his own cross. If the cross be such an instrument of torture as it has been represented to us by the artists, no single man could have borne it any distance. Ordinarily, however, the convicts did. There were three men crucified on this occasion, and two of them had no difficulty in bearing each his cross. Jesus also started in the procession from the castle, bearing His. Perhaps the order was something like this: First rode the centurion in command of the execution. Then came one of the robbers, guarded by four soldiers; then Jesus, similarly guarded; and then the second robber under the same guard. Each convict may have been

preceded by a soldier bearing a board on which was written with gypsum the name of the crime for which he was condemned. Or, such a board was suspended, as was sometimes done, from the neck of each convict. The reason assigned for this custom was that it was possible that the convict might, on his very way to the place of execution, be met by some one who had not heard of his trial and yet be in possession of information which would reverse or mitigate the sentence : and the prisoner was given that last chance.

So toward the city gate they went. It is to be recollected that in that night Jesus had had His parting with His disciples, had been betrayed by one, denied by another, deserted by all; that also He had spent a night of physical torture ; that His flesh had been lacerated by the scourge, so that He was suffering a double punishment; that His head was throbbing with the pain produced by the thorns which had been pressed into His flesh; and that He had endured enough mental and physical torture to make the most robust man unable to carry any cross heavy enough to serve its intended purpose. He fell under its weight ; and there He lay, for both Jew and Roman were too proud to lift the cross. At that moment a man named Simon came upon the scene. The feast had drawn to Jerusalem Jews from all points of the globe where they had settled. This Simon had come from Cyrene in Africa. He does not appear to have taken any interest in the trial, or indeed to have known any thing about it. But coming upon the pale and wasted Sufferer as He lay under His cross upon the ground, it is probable that he uttered some sentiment of surprised pity. It was enough to suggest to the

centurion the military impressment of Simon : so he was compelled to lift and carry the cross of Jesus.

After Jesus had been relieved of His load the procession was resumed, and it grew as it proceeded. People came forth from their houses. A great company of persons had gathered, and there were many women among them, drawn together by the strange curiosity which is felt to see those who are about to die. These women, without special sympathy with Jesus as a religious teacher, but having their womanly compassion stirred by seeing the sufferings of a man whose appearance contrasted with that of the robbers, who were also carrying their crosses to the place of crucifixion, broke out into bewailing lamentations. It was a touch of nature. The men were all against Him. The temper of the mob was opposed to any pity for Him. These women did not love Him as tenderly as Mary of Bethany, as passionately as Mary of Magdala ; but they were women, and women generally instinctively know the true man ; and they wept. It moved Jesus. It was the only incident on the way to the crucifixion which seems to have arrested His attention. He said nothing when He fell beneath the cross, nothing when they lifted it from His shoulder. But who can bear a woman's tears ? Jesus turned and said to them, " Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children ; for see ! the days are coming in which they shall say, ' Happy are the barren, and the wombs that bear not, and the breasts that suckled not.' Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, ' Fall on us ;' and to the hills, ' Cover us.' For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? "

He was then brought to a place which was called Golgotha in the Hebrew tongue, meaning "skull." It is to be noticed (1) that the Hebrew *Golgotha*, the Greek *Kranion*, and the Latin *Calvaria*, and the English *Skull*, all mean the same thing; (2) that the word "Calvary" occurs in the authorized English version only once, Luke xxiii., 33; and that the place of crucifixion is not called "the place of skulls," but simply "Skull," as moderns call certain hill-formations "Head," as "Cæsar's Head" in the Alleghany Mountains. Its formation probably suggested its name.

Where was Golgotha? If there be any thing quite certain in the topography of Jerusalem it is that it was *not* where there now stands what is called the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It is in tradition that this church was erected to indicate the spot of the crucifixion. That may be a mistake. It may have been originally intended simply to commemorate the great event. It has no claim to reverence. It has been the scene of disgraceful conflicts between the Latin and the Greek monks. It would seem that no devout traveler can have been in that edifice on a feast-day and not carried away a disagreeable memory of that disgraceful show-house. The writer of these pages has a grateful recollection of the kind protection given him by the Mahometan soldiers who preserve the peace between the Christian sects in that unholy church. It would seem that any gentleman would prefer to be a decent Turk than to be such a Christian as the ecclesiastics that celebrate Easter in the misnamed "Church of the Holy Sepulcher."

The true site must meet all the conditions of the history. These are six, namely: 1. It was without the then existing walls of Jerusalem (Matt. xxvii., 31, 32; xxviii., 11; and Paul in Hebrews xiii., 12). 2. It was near the city (John xix., 20). 3. It was popularly known as "The Skull" (Matt. xxvii., 33; Mark xv., 22; Luke xxiii., 33; John xix., 27). 4. It was near a gate to a leading thoroughfare (Matt. xxvii., 39; Mark xv., 29; Luke xxiii., 26). 5. It was a conspicuous spot (Matt. xxvii., 55; Mark xv., 40; Luke xxiii., 49). 6. It was near sepulchers and gardens (John xix., 38-42). Not one of these propositions can be affirmed of the spot on which the Church of the Holy Sepulcher stands, which is a low place inside the old walls, off the thoroughfares, and where no tombs would be allowed. All these six particulars meet in an elevation called the Grotto of Jeremiah, a short distance north of the Damascus Gate. It is outside the city. It is near. It is conspicuously shaped like a skull, and from almost every point of view reminds the beholders of a skull. It is near what is still the entrance to the great thoroughfare from the north of Judæa and all Upper Syria. It can be seen from almost every elevation about Jerusalem, and looks down on hills that look down on the modern Church of the Sepulcher. Eight years after he had written this decision of his judgment in "The Light of the Nations," p. 666, the writer of this paragraph was in Jerusalem. The first movement was to find Calvary. He had forgotten that the names of the gates of the city had been changed, and was greatly disappointed when, going out at St. Stephen's Gate, he faced the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the Mount of Olives,

and nothing that could be taken for Calvary. Walking to the northeast angle of the city walls there burst upon him the sight of a knoll about seventy feet high, and so like a skull in shape that it might be supposed to be an artificial formation, built up to represent a human skull. It is scarcely more than three hundred feet from the north wall, fronts the Damascus Gate, which was formerly called St. Stephen's Gate, and in every particular meets all the characteristics of Calvary that can be gathered from New Testament statements.

Before proceeding to crucify Jesus, the Roman soldiers offered Him a drink composed of sour wine, in which myrrh had been dissolved. Jesus refused. He would have nothing to dim the clearness of His vision or enfeeble the vigor of His intellect. Perhaps we might gather strength from the Immortal Sufferer's example to resist temptations to take narcotics when we must endure pain in the path of duty. It is an outrage to accuse Jesus of weakness or cowardice. Worn in body until He was as feeble as a young man could be, His whole behavior during the twenty-four hours from the evening of Thursday, the 6th of April, until the evening of Friday, the 7th, rises to a height of heroism not touched by any other human endurance.

It was now nine o'clock in the morning of Friday. They had laid the cross upon the ground, had stripped and stretched the person of Jesus upon it, had driven the nails through His hands and His feet, had lifted the instrument of torture with its precious Victim, and had let it down into the hole which had been prepared. Two robbers were crucified with Him. It does not appear that Jesus was submitted to any torture beyond that

which was inseparable from crucifixion, and beyond what the two robbers endured. His being crucified with such ruffians may have been intended as an indignity; but perhaps simply came to pass because it was customary to have executions at this feast. John seems to have attached no importance to the fact, his simple statement being "they crucified Him and two others with Him, one on either side and Jesus in the midst." But it was a fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah (liii., 12): "He was numbered with the transgressors." While His executioners were performing their work, Jesus prayed for them: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." It was touching and characteristic. He does not say, "I forgive you." That would be to allude too distinctly to the wrongs He was suffering. He thought of their guilt, not His own sufferings. It was a prayer of pure unselfishness.

#### THE FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS.

When they had set up the cross the soldiers sat down to watch it, as their duty was. The usage was to crucify convicts naked, and the clothing fell to the executioners as a perquisite. In the case of Jesus they had no difficulty with His outer garments, but when they came to His inmost article of dress they found it a strange fabric, without a seam, woven throughout. It may have been the product of maternal love. It may have been the handiwork of the tender and loving Mary of Bethany, or the passionate Mary of Magdala. How little did love think, as love's fingers wove it, to what torture should finally come the precious body it was intended to cover. Something about it made even rude Roman

soldiers hesitate. They determined not to tear it; they had their dice with them to amuse them in the long hours of the crucifixion watch, and so they settled the matter. Slight as it seems, it was the fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalms xxii., 16, 18: "The assembly of the wicked have inclosed Me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; they part My garments among them and cast lots for My vesture." The Roman soldiers knew nothing of this prediction. No man knows when he is fulfilling a prophecy.

The specification of that for which Jesus had been condemned was now placed over His head on the cross. It was written by Pilate, His judge. It was in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin, so that all beholders might be able to read it. It was written in the language of the Palestine populace, of the cultivated foreigners, and of the Roman officials. The Hebrew was the language of the civilization of religion; the Greek was the language of the civilization of culture; the Latin was the language of the civilization of power. The cross was the point of juncture of all forms of previous civilization, and together they have since flowed in a conjoined and constantly augmenting stream, so that the civilization inaugurated by that crucified Man is that in which all the best, the most vigorous, the most durable, in religion, in culture, and in civil government, is to be found in the nineteenth century after His death.

This is the inscription:

ישו הנגרי מלך היהודים.  
 ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων  
*Rex Judæorum*



Thus Rome officially decided that Jesus had no guilt, for it was no crime that His name should be Jesus, that He should have been literally or somewhat figuratively a king of the Jews. It is the assertion of Cæsar's government that Jesus was without crime. Personally to Pilate it was more. It was a gratification to be able to fling this slur in the faces of the persistent ecclesiastics who had coerced him. It is as if he had said: "This poor forlorn peasant, hanging on this cross, is good enough king for these Jews." Or it might mean, "They said they would have no king but Cæsar: I crucify Jesus; if He be their king He is a dead king, and the nails by which I fasten Him to the cross bind them to their rejection of all kings but Cæsar."

The high-priests were not slow to see this. They chose, notwithstanding their averment that they would have no king but Cæsar, to leave that question open. They were very loyal ecclesiastics, and the history of the world shows how far such men are to be trusted. Pilate had no faith in them. They rushed back to his palace, where he must have sat moody over the events of the day in which he had played so conspicuous and disagreeable a part. They called his attention to the character of the epigraph on the cross. They prayed him to change it, at least so as to show that it was *only a claim set up by Jesus*. His surly answer was, "What I have written, I have written." With that he dismissed them. It had been better for Pilate to have been so unbending earlier in the tragedy.

The cross was set up beside a thoroughfare. Those who passed by saw it. Some one of these recollected what had been testified at the trial, so called, and he

wagged his head and taunted Jesus, saying: "You who destroy the Temple, and build it in three days, save Yourself, if You are the Son of God, and come down from the cross." This reviling was not confined to the lower populace. The chief priests took it up, and probably walking in front of the cross, or standing near enough for Jesus to hear, they said among themselves, not addressing Him: "He saved others; He can not save Himself. If He be the Messiah, let Him save Himself. *He* the King of Israel! Let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe on Him. He trusted in God; let Him now deliver Him, if He will; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

The Roman soldiers, having no ecclesiastical bias and no theological views, began to echo the taunt of the populace and the priests. They mocked Him. That apparently forlorn and helpless peasant-prophet on the cross made great contrast with Cæsar's grandeur on the Palatine Hill in Rome, and with the barbaric splendor of some of the kings these soldiers had helped to conquer. The soldiers said to Him directly, "If You are the king of the Jews, save Yourself." They would like to see Him do it. It would be a marvel to see a man disengage himself from the cross. If He should attempt it, He would find Roman valor superior to any legerdemain or terrifying magic. If the Jews around these soldiers were not utterly obtuse, they must have felt that this insult reacted upon them in their civil and their ecclesiastical positions. These rude warriors from the Tiber were stamping out their State and their Church in Jesus.

Even one of the thieves, in the recklessness which

befalls men who are about to perish, began his raillery. "If You are the Messiah," said he, "save Yourself and us, my comrade and myself." But the other robber was not so obdurate. He rebuked his comrade: "Do you not fear God, seeing that you are in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing amiss." He then turned his eyes toward Jesus and said, "Jesus, remember me when You shall come into Your kingdom." Here was a marvelous confession. What this man could have known of Jesus prior to this time we have now no means of learning. He may have known His whole history, and much as it had interested him, he had not until this moment been able to see in Jesus the sign of His being Israel's king.

#### THE SECOND WORD FROM THE CROSS.

Jesus did not repel his faith. He accepted it. The man had a sense of guilt and helplessness. He believed in the power of Jesus to save him somehow. He was so humble and modest that he did not interrupt the suffering Jesus with a plea that He would help him now. He was willing to die for his offense against society. But he felt that Jesus was a royal personage and had a kingdom. He plaintively begged that when He began His reign Jesus would not wholly forget His fellow-sufferer in Golgotha. The accents of the pleading came to Jesus amid the hisses and groans and taunts and hateful uproar of His infuriated enemies. Jesus looked at the dying man and smoothed his rough passage to eternity with this reply: "I assuredly say to you that you shall be with Me in Paradise to-day."

What perfect confidence is here ; what an assurance of power ; what a claim over the future ; what a pledge to another ! He spoke as one to whom Paradise belonged—who held the keys of the garden of the Future and Immortality. Bound upon the cross, He ruled the spiritual world, and pledged to meet His fellow-sufferer on the other side of the grave. Together on the cross, they should be together in happiness. There was no confusion of ideas here, no loss of confidence, no breakdown, no despair. He makes no reply to raillery, but has a quick, loving answer for faith.

Jesus was not totally forsaken by His friends. The majority of the disciples had been scattered by the tragic events of the preceding night. Judas had betrayed Him, and Peter had denied Him, and the others had fled except John and the women. The beloved disciple came back. Love in him was stronger than terror. The women came in full force from the first, and through the morning “all His acquaintance,” that had come from Galilee, became sympathizing witnesses of His sufferings. Among the women are named His mother, and His aunt, Mary Cleophas, and Salome the mother of James and John, and Mary of Magdala. There were many other women. These all stood afar off. He seems to have had no conversation with His friends during the first three hours. As it neared noon there was coming upon Him a renewal of that heart-agony which had made the bloody sweat of Gethsemane. He looked upon His friends. He made no explanation of His position as being so contrary to all they had hoped and desired. It seemed as if His was to be a lost cause, and as if His very name was

being consigned to endless ignominy. He saw His mother standing near. She and John had approached, drawn by their intense love, which controlled every other sentiment, whether of fear or disappointment.

#### THE THIRD WORD FROM THE CROSS.

Jesus had a clean, clear human heart. He saw the sword entering Mary's soul. He did not call her "mother"; He gave Himself no such indulgence. Looking at John, he said: "Woman, see your son!" Looking at Mary, and addressing John, He said: "Behold your mother." It is as if the feeling He had for Mary in that hour was a sentiment He entertained toward all womanhood that is stricken and forsaken. "Woman": that was the dying Son's title for His mother. He had no title for His nearest male friend.

It was midday—the sixth, the sacred hour. The sun was in the splendor of a Syrian noon. Then came a mysterious thing. The earth began to darken. It was not an eclipse. It was at the full of the moon of the Passover. The darkness did not begin in the sky, but on the earth, as we learn from Luke, who, of all the biographers of Jesus, seems the most careful observer of physical phenomena. The darkness spread itself outward and upward until the sun was shrouded. It was a darkness which obliterated outlines. The Temple, the tower, the city walls disappeared. The people in Jerusalem could no longer see the crowd swaying about in Golgotha. The priests lost sight of their Victim. The crucified thieves could no more see each other. The Roman soldiers could not discern their dice. Mary of Magdala could not see Jesus. For three hours men

stood, or sat, or lay down. Jesus was in an agony. It was a long three hours for the Sufferer, for the persecutors, for Pilate, for the friends of Jesus. The world had dropped down into the core of darkness. All was night. Heaven, earth, the heart of man, the minds of the wicked and the souls of the just were all in darkness. When Mary's Son was being born midnight became a splendor. When Mary's Son was being slain midnight became a horror.

#### THE FOURTH WORD FROM THE CROSS.

At two o'clock the darkness passed away as mysteriously as it had come. The pent-up agony of Jesus found vent. He shrieked. His cry was articulate. The biographers have preserved the very syllables. It was in His mother-tongue, the Aramæan, and reminds us of an observed fact, that men in dying frequently speak their original dialect most accurately. The words with which Jesus thrilled the crowd were these: לֵפָּהּ שְׁבַקְתָּנִי, *Elohee', Elohee', lammawh' sebakthane'*, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

It is not necessary, perhaps, to say more than that the august Sufferer was consoling Himself in His agony by repeating the twenty-second Psalm, which from the days of David had been the comfort of distressed saints, and had always been regarded as a Messianic psalm.

The light came back to the hills, the city, and Golgotha. Men raised themselves. The cloud had rolled away, and with the clearing sky came the loud cry of Jesus. Perhaps in that darkness the consciences of His murderers began to be painfully uneasy. They caught the first words of the cry, "*Elohee, Elohee.*" Elijah

among the Jews was the patron of the distressed. Moreover, it had been prophesied that Elijah was to precede the Messias. Some said, "He calls Elijah." The others said, "Stop! let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." Perhaps the power as well as the hour of darkness had passed away. Perhaps Elijah was about to come. Perhaps the tawny, terrible prophet of Carmel would in a few moments descend into Golgotha, set free the Prisoner from the cross, and with superhuman power tear down, and with the fierceness of one at whose prayer fire fell down from heaven, scatter priest and procurator, Church and State, Jew and Gentile, and inaugurate the splendors of the Messianic reign.

#### THE FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH WORDS FROM THE CROSS.

This cry continued to puzzle the materialists who stood around the extraordinary Sufferer, until another saying came from Jesus. He simply said, "I thirst." Physiologically and psychologically this may indicate that His agony was closing. The spirit which had been so strung up that it could think of nothing which merely concerned His body, was now relaxing. He was passing from out the hour and from under the power of darkness, going out of a battle wounded but victorious. It may be noted as indicating Him to be in the full possession of His faculties, in the fullness of His bodily strength, and by no means suffering death as an effect of crucifixion, seeing that this is only the beginning of that terrible thirst which burns in those who are lingering on the cross. This circumstance seems quite incidentally mentioned by John (xix., 28), and by some

other of the biographers, and yet it is of great importance. In response one of the Roman soldiers ran and took a branch of hyssop, a plant probably growing near, the stock of which was about two feet long. So low did the crucified hang that when the soldier fastened a sponge to this stock, and filled it with the sour common wine, or vinegar, which they mingled with their water, it was quite easy to lay it on the mouth of Jesus. He took it and said, "It is finished." Then calling out with a loud voice, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit," He bowed His head and died.

The darkness which had come upon the whole land had reached its consummation in an earthquake, which rent the rocks in the neighborhood, and so moved the Temple that, at the very hour when worshipers were thronging into the holy place, and the priests were kindling the lamps before the veil which divided the holy from the holiest place, that strong, well-woven, annually-renewed veil split from top to bottom, and laid open before the startled attendants that sacred spot where the wings of the cherubim overshadowed the mercy-seat in the ark of the covenant, a spot no feet but those of the high-priest might tread, and a sight which no eyes but his might behold. The stone sepulchers around the city were broken by this convulsion in nature, and the stone doors were jarred off their hinges, and a few days after some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were visited by holy people whom they had seen dead and buried.

The Roman centurion who was in charge of the execution remained with his guard through all these terrifying phenomena. They had ceased to amuse them-



selves with dice. They stood watching the Victim. When their commander saw what was done he exclaimed, "Certainly this was a righteous man. Certainly this was a Son of God." He had seen men die, civilized and barbarian. He knew what Roman fortitude was. He knew what the crucifixion was. But here was something different from all he had ever witnessed. The fact is, that Jesus did not seem to come under the supreme effects of physical torture. He did not seem to die, in the sense that the soul was pressed from the body by pain, but He "gave up the ghost." It was apparently a voluntary dismissal on His own part of His soul from His body. No felon ever died so. Moreover, the mythology of his country had trained the soldier to believe that in earlier days the gods had come among men. He looked at Jesus. His mind ran rapidly over the phenomena which had filled the last six hours. The conviction came upon him, that if ever any of the kith and kin of the gods had dwelt in flesh, this was one of them. The Jews had condemned a good man: that was an outrage. They had caused the crucifixion of a god: that was a horror. It was the verdict of a pagan on one of the crimes of the Church.

Take all the literature of all languages and all ages, including the Hebrew Scriptures, take all the finest and highest and best thoughts and imaginings of godhood recorded by the poets and orators, and let the greatest genius of our race fuse them into one representation of deity, as the Greek sculptor combined all the beauties of all the women into one figure of surpassing grace: how far that would fall below the representation in the Evangel of the character and conduct of Jesus during

the last twenty-four hours of His life. The representation of Jupiter, even the representation of Jehovah, fails to equal in godliness, in all that the noblest, most gifted, most high-hearted men and women desire in a god, the representation of the Jesus in the New Testament. No greater god has been conceived. If we do not find God in Christ, then John should be our God, if we could find John. If Jesus Christ be not God, then the person who created Him must be God. If the things written about Jesus in the Evangelists be not true, then the Evangelists created Him, and they are worthy the adoration of men and of angels. But if those things be true, there is no One higher in the universe for angels and men to worship.

XXIII.

**The Key-stone Fact of Christianity.**

## JOHN XX.

(11) *Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping : so, as she wept, she stooped to the tomb ;* (12) *and she seeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.* (13) *And they say unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou ?" She saith unto them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."* (14) *When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and seeth Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.* (15) *Jesus saith unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."* (16) *Jesus saith unto her "Mary." She turned herself, and saith unto Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni" ; which is to say, "Master" [Teacher].* (17) *Jesus saith to her, "Touch Me not ; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father : but go unto My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God."* (18) *Mary Magdalene cometh and telleth [the good news to] the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" ; and how that He had said these things unto her.*

## THE KEY-STONE FACT OF CHRISTIANITY.

### THE CRUCIAL QUESTION.

CHRISTIANITY has for its logical basis one fact, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in the body which was actually crucified. Every highly intelligent person approaching Christianity from the outside, and carefully and rationally reading over its documents, would fix on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead as being the crucial question of the whole case. If Jesus did so rise, all His claims are established, and all the other miracles are entirely and easily credible; if He did not so rise, the whole system of Christianity falls.

He will perceive that Jesus predicted His own resurrection from the dead, and held it as a sufficient ground for the belief that He was divine. To all men of all ages who believe that there is a God, this fact, if it can be established, must confirm the divinity of our Lord. If there be a God, He must hold the gift of life, the power over existence, in His own hand, or there must be a life-giving agent in the universe outside of Himself. That extra being, if he can give life at pleasure, has the power of contravening the wishes of God and robbing Him of His glory by peopling His universe with those who would not be His subjects. This is so manifest, that all who believe in a God believe that life and death are in His hands. Then, if it can be shown that

Jesus arose from the dead, either God favored an imposition by giving it its seal of perfection and most glorious foundation of hope—an imposition which was to raise the impostor up to His own throne of supreme dominion—or else Jesus was holy, and, consequently, by His own words—for He must have been true under the circumstances—He was God. He raised Himself, if His words be true—an unparalleled circumstance even in the history of miracles. One who held delegated power from God might raise another ; but only a divine Being—God Himself—could raise His own assumed body from the grave. If this occurred, then the prophecies, which the Jews believed to refer to the Son of God, and His own prophetic speech when He spoke to His disciples about rearing the Temple again in three days, and His express application of the type of Jonah to Himself, and His other and even more distinct declarations of the fact, were wonderfully fulfilled, and Jesus Christ is God, and *Christianity is true!*

#### HE WAS DEAD.

Let us examine the evidence. On Friday, April 7th, A.D. 30, at three o'clock, Jesus was hanging on a cross. He had been there several hours. He had not a single friend in the world who was rich, no one who was influential either with the Jewish populace or with the ecclesiastical or political authorities, both of which had concurred in bringing Him to the cross. He was entirely in their power, and they had all the instrumentalities for carrying out their design to put Him to death, and were vigilantly and industriously using those appliances. The leaders of the ecclesiastical party, who had not

shrunk from conspiracy, and lying, and blasphemy, and the murder of the innocent, could not endure that their feast should be defiled by the sight of men dying on three crosses near Jerusalem on the high Sabbath of their church. Moreover, they did not know what effect the sight of the body of the innocent Jesus might have upon the fickle populace, who might still rescue Him ; so the ecclesiastics went to Pilate to ask that the death of the three crucified men might be hastened by the breaking of their legs, and that the bodies might be buried. Pilate had no care now as to what might happen. He consented.

The rude executioners did not hesitate with the two thieves. They were soon dispatched. But when the soldiers saw Jesus they were convinced that He was thoroughly dead. It were a wanton act to crush His limbs. One of the soldiers, more daring and hardened than the others, in order to make assurance doubly sure, thrust a spear into the side of Jesus, and forthwith there issued water and blood. The remarkable events of the past few hours, and the certainty of the death of the condemned, had probably removed all restraint, and any one might approach the cross. It was so low,—not lifting the body many feet above the ground, as the painters have it,—that John could distinctly see what was going forward. When his account was written, it had not yet been suggested that Jesus had not died but had passed into a swoon from which He subsequently revived. He could not have invented the statement to meet a theory which had no existence in his day.

His statement of facts John connects with two passages from the sacred Hebrew books, namely, those

which provided that not a bone of the paschal lamb should be broken (as Exodus xii., 46, and Numbers ix., 12), and the passage in Zechariah (xii., 10), in which John undoubtedly understood the prophet as predicting that the people should pierce Jehovah in the person of the Messiah, and should have great grief therefor.

Then Jesus was certainly dead.\*

#### TWO SANHEDRISTS BURY HIM.

At that time there were two men in Jerusalem who were rich, high-minded, intelligent members of the Sanhedrim, but taking no part in the persecution and slaughter of Jesus. Their names were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, the latter having had an interview with Jesus. Both these men believed Jesus to be both great and good. They had absented themselves from the Sanhedrim, which had been called together that morning by the high-priest. Each was probably ignorant of the feelings of the other. But they could not vote to execute Jesus, and they had not the courage to defend Him. Now they discover each the other's long regard for Jesus, and they unite in showing delicate attentions to the remains of the crucified Prophet. Pilate granted the body. Joseph brought a linen shroud, and Nicodemus brought the spicery.

There is a pensive beauty in John's simple statement: "In the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid." Matthew says that this sepulcher was Joseph's "own new tomb, which he had hewn out

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\* "The physical causes of the death of Jesus" I have discussed carefully in "The Light of the Nations," pp. 679-684.



in the rock." The place was near, and these good men, with pious hands, bore Jesus to it, and thus saved Him from being flung into a common ditch with the malefactors who were crucified with Him. These two men seem to have had no helpers. The friends of Jesus had fled. His enemies had returned to the city. Alone and solitary, these honorable counselors lifted and wrapped and carried and interred the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Joseph rolled up a great stone to the door of the tomb. It was "the Jews' preparation-day." He and Nicodemus left the garden to prepare for the Passover.

Now, if Jesus had not been really dead that fact would have been discovered by one or both of these men, who, in intelligence, surpassed the friends of Jesus. If the body had shown any signs of life they would not—*they* could not have confined it by closing the mouth of the cave-tomb. But that is just what they did. It was not two Galilean fishermen, but two learned and godly lawyers and senators who united in the opinion that Jesus was dead; and the friends of Jesus believed He was dead; and the enemies of Jesus believed He was dead; and the Roman soldiers believed He was dead.

#### HE WAS BURIED SECURELY.

In Joseph's sepulcher the body of Jesus lay through the whole of the Sabbath-day of April 8th, A.D. 30, so far as any evidence appears.

At the close of the Sabbath, the chief-priests and Pharisees went to Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command, therefore, that

the sepulcher be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people that He is risen from the dead, and so the last deceit be worse than the first." Pilate could have been in no sweet mood, but there was no reason why he should not grant their request. He had been forced by them to consent to the death of the young teacher: he might as well yield this also. He cared nothing for the result, and could have taken no interest in the predictions of a man whom he regarded as a harmless and unfortunate fanatic. He was cross. Yes, they shall have a guard, these mad priests who are frightened by a dead peasant! If it gratifies them to make fools of themselves they may do so: he will not hinder! He said to them, "Ye shall have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure. It would seem that they removed the great stone and examined the tomb and found the body there on Saturday evening after sun-down. Being so satisfied, His bitterest enemies rolled back the stone to the mouth of the tomb and added the precaution of sealing it. *And the Roman guard took possession.* No greater security was practicable. So they retired for the night and the soldiers remained.

#### THE OPENED SEPULCHER EMPTY.

Mary of Magdala and other women, knowing that the burial of Jesus by Joseph and Nicodemus had been hurried, although decent, had gone out on Saturday evening, the Sabbath being past, and had procured sweet spices, and were waiting anxiously for the morning which should follow the Sabbath, that they might go

and anoint the precious body, performing love's last offices before Jesus should be left, as they supposed, to lie forever in that grave. They knew that a great stone had been placed over the mouth of the sepulcher, but they do not seem to have known any thing of the government seal on the tomb, nor of the Roman guard. While it was yet dark, as they approached the garden they questioned how they might remove the stone. When they reached the spot they saw that the tomb was open. There flashed upon the mind of the devoted Mary of Magdala the suspicion that the beloved body had been removed by the enemies of Jesus and that outrages may have been committed upon it. She left the other women and rushed into the city and found Peter and John, and communicated the startling news to them. Both men rose and went out to the sepulcher. Peter had behaved so basely that he did not feel as if he were of the number of the disciples. But he had repented, and he loved the brotherhood of the disciples, and he loved his dead Master, and he would gladly make amends for his denials by devotion to the corpse of Jesus. Still the burden of the bad memory was on him. He did not go as fleetly as John. Both ran ; but John reached the sepulcher first. There a reverent awe checked him. He kneeled down and looked at the grave-clothes. Peter followed, and went right in. There lay the shroud wrapped up, and the napkin, which perhaps Mary of Magdala had wound about His mangled head. Every thing was orderly. He had been taken away by neither friends nor foes. The former would have had no care for the clothes, or have not removed them ; the latter would have torn them away carelessly.

It looked as if Jesus had risen and carefully folded and laid away the garments of the grave, wherewith the hands of respect and love had wrapped Him.

Peter induced John to follow him. Peter was puzzled. In John there began to spring up some faith. "He saw and believed"; for as yet, according to John's own testimony, "they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." Then they left the sepulcher and went home.

#### WHO LOVES MOST SEES FIRST.

But Mary of Magdala stood without at the sepulcher, weeping. The men might go, but she lingered about the spot where she had last seen the body of Him whom she loved with all her heart and soul. She was alone. Hers was an absorbing love and an absorbing grief. She gazed through her tears down into the sepulcher where the dear Jesus had been laid. She was flooded with sorrow. She saw the two angels in white, but she had no attention to give to even angels. Nothing in heaven or earth could interest her but Jesus. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She could not be astonished or frightened even by so brilliant an apparition as two angels; but she was ready to burst forth when the subject of her love was touched. She sobbed out, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him!"

What marvelous beauty of loving is here! "*My Lord!*" It was the emphasis of appropriating affection. He *was* hers more than He was any other's. She loved Him more than any other woman or any man loved

Him. And He had done every thing for her. She did not ask the angels for any consolation ; she was inconsolable. She turned to go, and through her tears she saw a man standing in the garden. She scarcely looked at him. One man filled her heart and brain and eyes, and He was dead, and His dear body was stolen. When the stranger asked her, "Why do you weep? whom do you seek?" she thought it was the gardener, and that he must know all about it. Her reply was, "Sir, if you have borne Him hence, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away!"

What marvelous beauty of loving is here! "Him"—as if everybody must know Mary's "Him"! If it were not considered meet for His corpse to be in that garden because He had died as a malefactor—although she felt that that body, if laid down on God's throne, would sweeten all heaven—she would take it away to some place where, without interruption, He might sleep the sleep of the dead, and she might weep the tears of the dying. She had not turned to gaze full on the speaker. It was Jesus, and she did not know it. He said to her, "Mary!" In His lifetime it is probable that He had never called the other Marys with the tone in which He was accustomed to pronounce her name, the poor dear friend whom He had brought out of the darkness of insanity with the marvelous light of His love. The syllables in the familiar tone thrilled her. She turned. She saw Him. She knew it was Jesus. She sprang toward Him, saying, "Rabboni!" It seems that she would have embraced Him, but Jesus checked her. He said, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet as-

cended to My Father : but go to My brethren and say unto them that I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God."

Then Mary of Magdala, lovingest of women, out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils and into whom seven angels had come, sad Mary, glad Mary, left her Lord and went about the errand on which He sent her.

#### THEN "THE OTHER WOMEN."

Christ's interview with Mary was exceedingly brief. Before the other women could reach the city Jesus was with them. He met them. He saluted them with "All hail!" Combining the accounts given by Mark and Matthew, a very natural history seems to me to be this: The women had entered the sepulcher and seen where Jesus lay; then they had the vision of the angels; then they went out "quickly" and fled from the sepulcher, for they trembled and were amazed, "and departed with fear and great joy." Leaving the sepulcher in great agitation, they may have wandered off from the city quite as naturally as toward it; but recalling the message of the angel to the disciples, their joy predominated; their mental equipoise began to return. To make up the lost time they began to run, and thus they met Jesus. They knew Him at once. As soon as He saluted them they fell at His feet, clasping them and rendering Him homage. He permitted in them what He had forbidden in Mary of Magdala. Their worship and their feelings were quite different from those of the loving Mary. Jesus soothed them, saying, "Be not afraid; go tell the brethren that I go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." ("Light of the Nations," pp. 690, 691.)

So "this same Jesus" who had been crucified and pierced with a spear and buried two nights and parts of three days *had risen* and been seen by some of His disciples. They proclaimed Him risen. They challenged the exhibition of the body if He had not risen. Their enemies could not produce the body nor silence the enthusiastic apostles.

Here, then, at the time of a political and religious crisis, when the Roman power should have investigated the matter, when two antagonistic parties were interested in fastening the crime each upon the other, the seal of the Roman government is violated, and no investigation is made or even sought! The conclusion is inevitable.

#### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE EARLIER THAN THE EVANGELY.

But there is another element of evidence which enters into this examination, and conclusively establishes the resurrection of Jesus, even if all the details which we have gathered from the Evangelists be set aside. We have literary remains of the first century *written before the Evangelies*, or any portion thereof, was produced. It has been historically established that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified in or near Jerusalem about A.D. 30. The earliest of the four gospels was produced not later than seventy years thereafter, and the latest not later than ninety years thereafter. Intermediately there were four documents produced and published, which are admitted to be genuine and authentic even by scholars and critics who are not believers in the gospels. These four letters are placed on the same footing as the Letters of Cicero,

which were produced one hundred years earlier, and which are relied upon for knowledge of what was going on in Rome in the first half of the first century before Christ, just as the *Memoirs of Talleyrand*, now (1891) just published, let us into the state of French affairs at the close of the eighteenth and the earliest decades of the nineteenth century. The documents referred to are the four letters of Paul: one to the Galatians, written A.D. 55; two to the Corinthians, A.D. 56; and one to the Romans, A.D. 59. The opinion of scholars, Christian and infidel, that these are authentic and that we are in possession of genuine copies, is unanimous. No living scholar rejects them, although some throw overboard all the rest of the New Testament.

#### FOUR LETTERS OF PAUL.

Let us critically examine what they prove. The latest was written within twenty-nine years of the death of Jesus; the earliest, still nearer to that event. It is as if any American who had been engaged in the Civil War should in 1891 give his memory of the affairs of this nation in the year 1862, the writer being now about fifty years of age, in the full possession of his ripened faculties and powers. Such was Paul. He was at least twenty-two years old when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. He was about thirty when, after having been an unbeliever, a disbeliever, a persecutor of the faith in Jesus, he was converted into a missionary of the new form of religion. For twenty years he had traveled from Syria to Spain. He was a man of great equipoise. He had so much learning and mental force that to-day he has more influence over the human intellect than all



the men who existed in his century, except the Man of Galilee.

What can we learn from this man's writings? We learn that within a very few years after Jesus died there was a large company of people who went by His name and were kept together by their belief in His resurrection; that they were wide-spread in Jerusalem, in Rome, in other cities; that they staked the truth and claim of Christianity on the fact of His resurrection; that although they differed in their opinions as to the general resurrection of the human body, yet as to the resurrection of the body of Jesus they were perfectly unanimous, without a dissenting voice, without the suggestion of a suspicion of any contrary theory; that after more than a quarter of a century they were as unanimous in their belief that Jesus Christ had been killed and had risen from the dead as the American people to-day are that Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States in March of 1861, and murdered in April, 1865. For twenty years Paul had found this unanimity everywhere. He himself had never doubted the fact, had always declared it, and about the twenty-eighth anniversary of the event he wrote to the Corinthians that there were over two hundred and fifty persons then living who had seen Jesus after His resurrection, and that he himself was one of them, and that they rested the whole of Christianity on the fact: "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain" (1 Cor. xv.). No man can preach Christianity if he do not believe that Christ has really risen. There is nothing peculiar to Christianity to be believed if there be any doubt of Christ's resurrection. Notice this, too:

Some of those to whom he wrote did not believe in the general resurrection of the human body, and he was endeavoring to show them that they were in error, and his argument was that this error of theirs could not stand with what they all believed and all admitted and never questioned, namely, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. If there had ever been a Christian who had ever denied the resurrection of Jesus, the Apostle's argument would have been futile, if not childish. But on the universal belief in the resurrection of Jesus that argument stood irrefutable.

Now, then, every intelligent person in this age must believe that Jesus rose from the dead, or he must account for the sudden rise and the wide spread of the universally-held belief in it as a fact. The Prophet had died as a malefactor. All of His adherents had abandoned faith in His claim to Messiahship. They broke up one Friday night. In three days they were gathered together and began to grow; in a quarter of a century they were all over the Roman Empire; to-day they are in all lands, and number millions, including the most acute and powerful and learned of men. For eighteen centuries a great superstructure has been growing in breadth, in height, in adornment, in grandeur, and in strength, and the whole rests upon one single, solitary proposition, namely, that JESUS CHRIST AROSE FROM THE DEAD.

Trying this question, then, by the common rules of testimony, we must conclude—unless the disciples were wilder enthusiasts than history or fiction anywhere presents—in the nature of things, as the body of Christ was crucified, dead, and buried; and as on the third morning He was not in the grave, and could not have been

either in the hands of the Jews or in possession of His disciples; and as there are only three cases that can be supposed, and two are shown to be impossible; we must give up all reliance on human memory and human testimony, or be irresistibly driven to the conclusion that **JESUS CHRIST AROSE FROM THE DEAD.**

Moreover, on the hypothesis that Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, the history of eighteen centuries becomes a chaos, and it is impossible to account for the present state of things in the world, especially for the survival of Christianity; but all things fall into place, and scientific demands are satisfied by the acceptance as a fact of the statement that **JESUS THE CRUCIFIED AROSE FROM THE DEAD.**

O God, O Kinsman loved, but not enough!  
O Man with eyes majestic after death,  
Whose feet have toiled along our pathways rough,  
Whose lips drawn human breath,  
  
By that one likeness which is ours and Thine,  
By that one nature which doth hold us kin,  
By that high heaven where, sinless, Thou dost shine,  
To draw us sinners in,  
  
By Thy last silence in the judgment-hall,  
By long foreknowledge of the deadly tree,  
By darkness, by the wormwood and the gall,  
I pray Thee, visit me.  
  
Come, lest this heart should, cold and cast away,  
Die ere the Guest adored she entertain—  
Lest eyes which never saw Thine earthly day  
Should miss Thy heavenly reign.  
  
And deign, O Watcher with the sleepless brow,  
Pathetic in its yearning—deign reply:  
Is there, Oh, is there aught that such as Thou  
Wouldst take from such as I?

—JEAN INGELow.

XXIV.

In Both Worlds.

## JOHN XXIV.

(1) *After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and He manifested Himself in this wise.* (2) *There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zeb-edee, and two other of His disciples.* (3) *Simon Peter saith unto them, "I go a fishing." They say unto him, "We also come with thee." They went forth, and entered into the boat; and that night they took nothing.* (4) *But when day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach: howbeit the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.* (5) *Jesus therefore saith unto them, "Children, have ye aught to eat?" They answered Him, "No."* (6) *And He said unto them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find." They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.* (7) *That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea.* (8) *But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits off), dragging the net full of fishes.* (9) *So when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.* (10) *Jesus saith unto them, "Bring of the fish which ye have now taken."* (11) *Simon Peter therefore went up, and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there was so many the net was not rent.* (12) *Jesus saith unto them, "Come, and break your fast." And none of the disciples inquire of Him, "Who art thou?" knowing that it was the Lord.* (13) *Jesus cometh, and taketh the bread, and giveth them, and the fish likewise.* (14) *This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that He was risen from the dead.*

## THE CHRIST IN BOTH WORLDS.

### APPEARANCE OF THE RISEN JESUS.

THE accounts of the many and varied appearances of Jesus to His disciples during the forty days next after His resurrection must afford to every thoughtful man a subject for profoundly interesting study, and to every Christian heart abundant themes for comforting meditation.

The appearance to Mary of Magdala, the loveliest and lovingest saint, has already been studied. That occurred early on Sunday morning, April 9, A.D. 30. It was His first appearance to a human being. Probably He did not show Himself to the guard. They had become frightened and had fled. The eyes of dear Mary of Magdala were the first to see Him, and to her the risen Saviour addressed His earliest communication. The very first word of the risen Lord was "woman." But His beloved did not know Him until He said "Mary." Her own name, uttered by the lips which must so often have pronounced it, spoken in tones which even death and the grave had not altered, caused her to look up, and that great countenance of power and love, which life and death had combined to make most majestic, brought, with the recognition, her cry of rapture and surprise, and led to a brief conversation, in which Christ made no revelation from the world out of which He had just returned.

It would appear that Mary was about to give Him the

pure caress of her hands by clinging to the beloved form which, perhaps, she had oftentimes, with the Mother Mary, soothed by her touch. Jesus said: "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father." This is a perplexing speech. Stier well says "that it all depends upon what *Mary meant by her touching.*" Perhaps she intended to cling to Him, as a loving woman naturally would when she had received the beloved back from the grave. Now He warned her that this could not be, that the old familiar loving intercourse could not be renewed, that He had not reached that final estate in which there could be perfect union and confidential intercourse. They had had one sweet, pure, blessed relation of intercourse, which had been so helpful to them both, but now death had made an intermediate state, from which they should ascend to the final state of the spiritual life in heaven, until which consummation she, of all women, would do well to restrain her love's outgoings. She would clasp Him to hold Him, but He forbade it, that she might know that His return was but for a season. She saw her risen Lord as one who had come to remain; He knew that He was soon going again. She saw the meeting in a human way, He in a divine. He knew that Mary might miss a higher, a spiritual, apprehension and embracing of His very Self if she were indulged in any sentimental effusion toward His body, even though it was a body which had passed through the grave.

#### THE FIRST PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL A WOMAN.

But in moderating the storm of her delight He charges her with a great commission. He bestows upon



her the greatest honor ever given to any woman, namely, that she have the first announcing of the greatest fact that ever came into the biography of God or man, the fact which gives its supreme importance to the whole career of Jesus, the fact which is the key-stone that holds the whole arch of His life and religion from falling, namely, His Resurrection from the Dead. The cure of effusive and useless sentimentality is action. Jesus did not leave Mary—let us mark that—but lovingly sent her away to be the first preacher of Gospel doctrine. Troops of angels announced His birth; one woman, *His Mary*, worth a thousand angels, announced His resurrection. “Go: go unto My brethren, and say unto them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.’”

There was that in the look and tone of Jesus which met response in the love and veneration of Mary, sending her quickly on her blessed errand: and this *woman* “preached to the disciples (1) that she had seen the Lord, and (2) what things He said to her.” In that discourse of the first Preaching Woman we have the two themes of all Christian preaching ever since, namely, (1) the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, and (2) the doctrines which, for their importance, rest upon that resurrection.

#### THE THREAD OF THE STORY.

It may be well to gather the threads of the story, so as to give the appearances of Jesus chronologically. It will be remembered that on this first Easter morning, Mary of Magdala and three other devout women, all devoted to Jesus, had come to the sepulcher to perform offices of

love toward the body of Jesus. When they found that the stone had been rolled away, Mary of Magdala flew back to John and Peter. The three women, Mary (Zebedee's wife), Salome, and Joanna, entered the sepulcher. Mark that the names of all who entered the tomb are preserved. They do not seem to have noticed the angel until they had ascertained the absence of Jesus. They were sorely perplexed. Perhaps they had gone into an inner chamber of the tomb, and returned, after finding that the corpse was missing, when the angel revealed himself to them. Luke says there were two angels, or rather, "two men in long shining garments." The women were afraid. They bowed their heads. The angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here. He is risen, as He said. Come and see the place where they laid Him." He showed them the spot, and the grave-clothes lying in order, and then said, "Remember how He spoke to you when He was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." The women then distinctly recalled that prediction. The angel added, "Go your way quickly, and tell His disciples, even Peter, that He is risen from the dead, and goes before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He said to you." The women started off toward the city, full of mingled fear and joy. They missed Peter and John and Mary, who were approaching the sepulcher. Angels had announced to them the glad evangel which Jesus had told to His

Mary. They saw only angels : dear Mary of Magdala saw Jesus.

When Mary left Jesus, He appeared to the three other women, meeting them before they could reach the city. The account of that meeting is given on page 336. It will be remembered that Jesus sent these women to tell His disciples that He would go into Galilee, and that they would see Him there. When these women went with their message to the apostles, the men did not believe them, but what was reported seemed to them like "crazy talk" (Luke xxiv., 11). The disciples of Jesus can never be charged with inordinate credulity.

#### APPEARING TO PETER.

It was some time during that Sunday morning that Jesus appeared to Peter. We learn of this only by two incidental allusions. When the two disciples returned from Emmaus, as we shall see, and told the other disciples that they had seen and talked with the Lord, then they learned that He had also appeared to Peter. Indeed, it would seem that just as they entered the room, before they could tell their story, the eleven met them with the glad announcement, "The Lord is risen indeed and has appeared unto Simon" (Luke xxiv., 34), and Peter was there to corroborate it. St. Paul, in speaking of those who had seen the risen Christ (1 Cor. xv., 5), mentions Peter first and alone. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve."

It is to be noticed that Christ's first appearance was to an individual, a woman, the woman who had loved Him most and been most devoted and held the most tender and confidential relations with Him. His second to

three women. His third to an individual, a man, the man who had been at one time the most zealous of His champions, but had proved to be the only man of His twelve chosen apostles who could deny Him to His face. Even Judas had not done that. We can understand why Jesus had met Mary first of all and in holy solitude. He does the same with Peter.

Poor Peter ! The look which Jesus gave him at the denial must have haunted him. He could hardly have counted himself longer among the disciples. But he had sought John, or John had sought him, and they were both together when dear Mary of Magdala came with the tidings of the resurrection. In his impetuosity he had walked off with John to the sepulcher. He had dared to enter it. His examination satisfied him that Jesus had arisen. Then he left the sepulcher, with no comfort in his heart. Would the Lord ever appear to him ? No message had come by Mary.

We may fancy him wandering about Jerusalem and so perhaps finding the women at the moment when he was tossed by torturing alternations of hopes and fears, and had learned that an angel had sent him a message by them, saying, "Go your way and tell His disciples, *even Peter*, that He goeth before you into Galilee ; there ye shall see Him." He was then to see the Lord ; but how would he be received by Him toward whom he had behaved most basely ?

Perhaps it was while he was thinking thus—saying over to himself, "*Even Peter ! Even Peter !*" that Jesus appeared to him. What the salutation was, what the discourse between them, as to its manner or its words, we may never know. A sacred veil hangs over

that sacred interview. But from that hour Peter was transformed. He returned to the company of the apostles, and was with them to give the glad tidings that Jesus had appeared to him also ! “ *Even Peter !* ”

#### APPEARING TO THE DISCIPLES GOING TO EMMAUS.

In the afternoon of that first Easter two disciples left Jerusalem to walk to Emmaus, a village seven miles distant. The name of one is preserved : it was Cleopas ; but we know not who he was. They started probably about half-past three o'clock, after the evening sacrifice. They had heard the reports which seemed to have been circulated among the friends of Jesus that the sepulcher was empty. As they walked they conversed upon the subject nearest to all their hopes and fears and interests, the dead Jesus, and what had happened in the three eventful days. They were perplexed. They “ reasoned.” They were probably striving to reconcile the apparently conflicting facts, the claims of Jesus and His manifest power, with the ignominious death which He had suffered. Jesus drew near and walked with them ; but they were so absorbed that they did not notice Him.

Jesus spoke to them respectfully in such a way as not to be offensive even in a stranger. “ What are these words that ye exchange one with another as ye walk ? ” Luke says that “ they stood with sorrowful countenances.” They looked at Jesus, but did not recognize Him. The same historian says, “ Their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.” Mark says that Jesus “ appeared in another form unto them.” It is to be noticed that some change must have passed in the appearance of His person. None of His friends recog-

nized Him immediately on first sight ; but none failed to recognize Him before they parted. Who can tell what that change was ? It was His own body. They all saw, and some touched Him. Was the grossness of the material body disappearing, and the fineness of the spiritual body coming forth ?

On the way the Master and the disciples had a most interesting conversation, which the Evangelist relates.

Upon reaching the house where they were to abide, Jesus was about to take His leave and pass on. But He had been so charming a talker, His glowing eloquence had so won the hearts of His two ingenuous listeners, that they urged Him to stay with them. He consented. When the meal was spread Jesus assumed the host's place. As they reclined at the table, He took bread and uttered the usual thanksgiving, which, according to the Jewish ritual, was obligatory where three ate together. There was something in the tone, or there was some change came over Jesus, which caused them to recognize their dear dead Friend, or, perhaps, as He broke the bread they saw His wounded hands. "Their eyes were opened," says Luke. At that instant Jesus became invisible to them.

Then they said to each other: "Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked to us by the way, and opened the Scriptures to us?" They were so excited at what had happened that they arose and returned to Jerusalem. It must have been night, but enough was happening to draw the little circle closer together. When Cleopas and his companion reached the city they found the eleven apostles together and others of the disciples. As soon as they entered some one said to them: "The

Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." And perhaps all the strange occurrences of the day, so far as they knew them, were related by the company to the two who had just come from Emmaus.

#### APPEARING TO THE TEN.

We are to remember that there never were men more incredulous than were these first disciples of Jesus. Here were His eleven apostles gathered on the evening of the first Easter. Only one of them had seen Him. The other ten had that one apostle's testimony, which was corroborated by the strange talk of the women and this new account of the two men, *not* "apostles," just come from Emmaus. There was great incredulity in the company, and much perplexity. They all believed that He was no longer in the sepulcher; but His appearance to Mary and the other women, and Simon, who professed to have seen Him, seemed to them like hallucination. The story told by the Emmaus disciples increased the perplexity of the company. Jesus was seen so often, in such different places, so near the same time, and vanishing so strangely, and yet He had not visited the apostles as a body. It began to be frightful.

It was probably the first time they had been gathered together since the supper with Jesus on Thursday night. They were afraid of the church authorities, and so the doors were shut. Just when they were in most perplexity, Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst. Whether He opened the door, or was admitted by the doorkeeper, who might have seen that it was Jesus, or whether it was accomplished in some inexplicable way, we can not say. Here is the simple historical statement. It shows

that He was no longer in the grave, but was in bodily intercourse with the disciples. As He entered He said: "Peace to you!" It was His usual salutation. But they were terrified and affrighted. Their nerves were unstrung by the events of the day. They were so agitated that they did not notice His salutation.

He said to them: "Why are you troubled? And why do reasonings arise in your hearts?" He saw that they regarded Him as some strange "appearance" merely. He reproved them for not believing the men and women who had seen Him and reported His resurrection, thus preparing them for His coming into their midst. He exhibited the wounds which they knew he had received in crucifixion. "Behold My feet and My hands, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see: for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see Me have."

#### THE RISEN MASTER EATS WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

Whether they touched Him or not we do not know; they might have done so. But they were overjoyed and behaved just as people would behave who were not playing a part or posturing for effect. Jesus said very simply: "Have you any thing to eat here?" They gave Him some broiled fish and some honeycomb. He took them and ate, the whole company beholding Him. And while eating He said to them: "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me." These are the parts into which they were accustomed to classify the canonical Scriptures. He showed that these all pointed to His death and resurrec-



tion. He concluded by adding: "Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance for the remission of sins should be proclaimed in His name among all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things: and, behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry in the city until you be endued with power from on high." He cleared up for them a point which was greatly dark to the Jewish mind, namely, that the Christ, the Messiah of God, should be a sufferer. They had thoroughly misread the Scriptures. We need not be surprised at that, when we see how traditional readings of the New Testament come to have such influence on men, that when one gives a natural and consistent interpretation it often seems a shocking innovation. His command to remain in Jerusalem must be understood as making that their center and headquarters, as we soon see them ordered to Galilee for a season.

#### GIVES THEM THE HOLY SPIRIT.

John records that Jesus again said, "Peace unto you! As My Father has sent Me, I also will send you." And then He breathed on them, and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you remit the sins of any, they shall be remitted to them; and if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." The act of breathing seems symbolical. These men were from that time very different from the men they had been before. They were wiser, better, deeper, more holy men. The last words are not to be interpreted as conferring upon any corporate body of officials the authority to bind upon their fellow-

men the sins of which they have been guilty, and to forgive authoritatively all whom they choose to forgive. Consider (1) that the company addressed were not the twelve apostles, because there were other persons present to whom the Holy Spirit was given, if given to any, and who received this authority quite as much as the apostles, of whom there were only ten present, the place of Judas Iscariot not having been filled, and Thomas Didymus being absent. (2) Moreover, there is not the slightest historical evidence that any of this company, whether disciples or apostles, ever, separately or conjointly, attempted to exercise what came long afterward, in churchly corruptions, to be called "absolution." This pretense of priestcraft rests itself altogether on a misrepresentation of this passage.

This saying of Jesus seems to mean that to those men would be given by the Holy Spirit the ability to discern, as Christ then gave them power to declare, as He did to all the other witnesses of His reappearance, what is right and what is wrong, according to the principles of Christian ethics. Only this; nothing more: and this is much. As what they should set forth of their risen Saviour was to be the only rule of faith, so what they should set forth of the morals of Christianity should be the rule of Christian practice. Since the last of those who actually saw the risen Jesus spoke and wrote it has been true that "if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book, and if any man shall take away from the words of the Book of *this* prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life" (Rev. xxii., 18, 19).

## APPEARING TO THOMAS.

Thomas had been absent from this Easter evening meeting when the Lord visited the company of the disciples. We can only conjecture, we do not know, the reasons of this absence ; but we do know that there was no more manly and loyal soul in that circle. His brethren told him of their meeting with Jesus, and they probably told him that the Master's appearance had changed, and may have confessed that they had not touched Him. Through all that week Thomas remained incredulous. To all their repeated representations Thomas at last gave his decided answer : " Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." He was all the week in this unhappy state of mind. If his friends were mistaken, they were at least happy.

And so another Sabbath passed, and another Sunday. The friends of Jesus were collected again. On Sunday, April 16, in the evening, Thomas was now with them. Jesus suddenly stood in their midst, as He had done eight nights before. He repeated the usual salutation, " Peace unto you !" Then turning at once to Thomas, He said, " Reach hither thy finger, and see My hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas had gazed at Him through all this speech. It was not a ghost. It was not a phantasm. It was The Master. However changed, it was undoubtedly He. Thomas knew the voice. The Master probably had not met any of the disciples during the intervening week, else they would have told Thomas. But Jesus knew his very thoughts,

and repeated his very words, and offered Himself to the very test which Thomas had proposed. Thomas, who had been so skeptical, instantly believed of Jesus three things: that He retained His personality; that He could be where He would at any moment; and that He knew all things. The whole infidelity of Thomas broke down at once. He acknowledged all. The resurrection of Jesus was an accomplished fact. Here were the pierced hands, and ankles, and side. He was omnipresent. He was omniscient. All the preconceptions of his brethren in regard to their Master were below the fact. He was very God. Thomas worshiped Him, calling Him "My God." Jesus recognized the faith of Thomas in His Godhead as correct, and while receiving the homage due only to God, He administered a mild rebuke for the slowness of the faith of Thomas: "Thomas, you have believed because you have seen Me: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

#### GOING TO GALILEE.

The first six appearances of Jesus had occurred in or near Jerusalem. It bound the disciples into a company of believers. But as yet they had no plan. The eleven apostles left the metropolis for Galilee (Matt. xxviii., 16). At the last supper He had said to them words which were then incomprehensible: "After I am risen again, I will go before you unto Galilee" (Mark xiv., 28). And the angel at the sepulcher had reminded the women of that promise, and directed them to "tell His disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you unto Galilee." Naturally, they would prudently remain

in Jerusalem until the close of the Passover. They would then follow the direction of Jesus, and go back to their old homes in Galilee. Beyond that they had no direction, except the knowledge of the fact that they were to come back to Jerusalem and await the gift of the Holy Spirit. They did not know when that should occur; in point of fact it did not occur until about two months afterward. While waiting for the reappearance of their Lord, and further directions, they naturally resumed their old employment on which their livelihood depended. One evening, on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, Simon Peter said he should go a fishing. Thomas Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana, and James and John, and two other apostles, who are not named, were of the company. These seven were all experienced fishermen, but they toiled all night and caught nothing.

#### APPEARANCE BY THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

At break of day Jesus was standing on the shore; but His disciples did not recognize Him. It is related of each appearance of Jesus after His resurrection that He was not recognized at first sight by His most intimate friends. They had, then, no great credulousness. They saw the stranger, standing on the shore, as an early purchaser of fish might be who stood where he saw the men fishing and awaited an opportunity to buy. At last He said, "Boys, have you any meat?" The form of the question would not arouse the suspicion that it was Jesus. It was such as any passer-by might ask of an angler. They answered, "No." He said to them, "Cast the

net on the right side of the ship and you shall find." Even this did not reveal Jesus. Any man acquainted with the lake might have detected from the shore some sign of fish which had eluded their weary eyes. It was an easy thing to do; so they followed the stranger's direction, and they were not able to draw the net for the multitude of fishes.

John's quick eye first recognized Jesus. He said to Peter, "It is the Lord." Since the crucifixion these two men, so much unlike, each having what the other lacked, had been drawn into a very close companionship. They were in a boat together. Peter, always impulsive, pulled on his fisher's coat to go to Jesus. The vessel was about three hundred feet from the shore. The other disciples came up to the help of John, and they dragged the net and the fishes near enough to the shore to secure them.

Landing, they saw a fire of coals, and fish thereon, and bread. Jesus directed them to bring of the fish they had just caught; and Simon Peter, perhaps now recollecting how he had abandoned John, promptly obeyed the command, and landed the unbroken net with its contents of one hundred and fifty-three great fishes. Jesus then said, "Come and dine." Jesus divided the bread and the fish. It was a silent meal. A tender awe was on the company. The disciples knew it was "the Lord," as they had now learned to call Him, but they asked Him no questions.

#### APPEARANCE TO A GREAT COMPANY.

From Matthew's account (xxviii., 16) we learn that Jesus had appointed a time and a place in Galilee to

meet His followers. We know of the time only that it was within forty days after the resurrection. The place was a mountain. It would seem that Mount Tabor would be the most convenient place for such an assemblage. The fact that it was inhabited is against the theory of those who would make it the scene of the Transfiguration, but is rather in favor of its selection for this meeting, as the inhabitants were Galilæans, and would be at least not unfriendly to the followers of Jesus. Tabor is six miles east of Nazareth. On the top is a table about a mile and a half in circumference.

This is the only occasion mentioned by any Evangelist which can correspond with a fact mentioned by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (xv., 6): "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." It would seem that the apostles had been at pains to make this appointment known to all who might be supposed to be, in any sense, disciples of Jesus. It was a large gathering. Afterwards, in Jerusalem, this company mustered only one hundred and twenty. While in Galilee, and before this meeting, the apostles had doubtlessly been industriously repeating the narrative of all the strange occurrences of the resurrection and the repeated appearances of Jesus. Thomas had most probably given an account of his mental processes by which he had gone over from despondent unbelief to exultant faith in Jesus as God, and had told how he had worshiped Jesus, and how the Master had received the homage due only to God.

Jesus appeared in their midst. No account has been preserved of His manner of approach. When they saw Him the body of the disciples worshiped Him.

## APPEARANCE TO JAMES.

There was another appearance of Jesus. It was to His brother James. All we know of this is the statement of it by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv., 17). It was probably in May, A.D. 30. No account of the interview survives, if ever written.

## HIS FINAL APPEARANCE.

The last appearance of Jesus was to His disciples in Jerusalem, on the fortieth day after His resurrection, which would be May 7th. He led them forth toward Bethany. Somewhere on the Mount of Olives He lifted up His hands, those pierced hands, to bless them, and while in the act of pronouncing His final benediction He was parted from them. In their sight He ascended. He passed into a cloud. The rapt disciples stood gazing up into that part of the heavens where they had last beheld their Lord. Suddenly two men in white apparel stood beside the silent group, and one said, "Ye men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him taken into heaven."

That poor little company of believers, whose faith had been crushed, whose hopes had been extinguished, whose love had been baffled, returned to Jerusalem a believing, hopeful, loving, happy body of men, and began then and there to declare that Jesus was risen from the dead. In the face of Caiaphas and the Scribes and the Pharisees, and the hundreds who had seen Him hanging on the cross, they declared that He had been alive forty days; and



they stood ready to prove it by half a thousand witnesses. And not a Scribe, not a Pharisee, not a priest, not any Jew, arose to declare, or even intimate, that it was false, and to produce facts to show it false. *It was true*, and they knew it, and by their silence they confessed it. JESUS HAD RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS APPEARANCES.

There are some characteristics of these appearances which may be worth studying. It is to be noticed that as He was born of a woman and not of a man, His first appearance was to one *woman* and His second to several *women*; that His third was to one disciple alone, and His fourth to two, thus gradually preparing the minds and hearts of His disciples for His reception in a body; that His fifth was apparently for the most hesitating of the company of His followers; and that two of the appearances were probably in sight of Nazareth, where He had lived and labored, and that the last was in sight of Bethlehem, where He was born, of Gethsemane, where He had agonized, and of Golgotha, where He had been murdered.

He appeared to Mary: Love is immortal. He appeared to the other women: Immortal Love honors by giving service. He appeared to Peter: Immortal Love forgives. He appeared to the disciples on the way to Emmaus: Immortal Love sympathizes. He appeared to Thomas, the honest doubter: Immortal Love is tenderly and instructively sympathetic. To the grief of love, of perplexity, of penitence, and of doubt, Immortal Love comes up from the grave and pauses to give comfort before ascending into heaven.

The scholarly Luke, in the opening of his book entitled the "Acts of the Apostles," speaks of these epiphanies, these reappearances of Jesus, in a very noteworthy manner. He gives the time, "forty days." He represents the Lord as "showing Himself," and showing Himself "alive," in "many" ways that were "proofs infallible," and "speaking to them of things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

The belief in His resurrection is not left to any one appearance, even if it had been to all the apostles and the Sanhedrim together. The agitation of mind unfitting them to test any thing would have prevailed through the whole of any *one* interview of any reasonable length. But He came repeatedly to different ones at different times and in different places, and sometimes to all together. He touched them, ate with them, talked with them. He familiarized them so with His appearance that they could receive instruction as to what they were to do next. He accustomed them to regard Him on the divinity side of His existence. He did not stay with them as before His crucifixion. He was the same and yet different. His disappearances were as remarkable as His comings. As their crucified, risen Lord, He could make them see truth as they could not be made to see it before His death and resurrection. He gave them instruction in the kingdom of heaven. In their vision He grew from being a Jewish Rabbi into the king of the kingdom of heaven. In it all He seems to have made no intimation of any "church" in the sense understood in this age. In that sense not one of those who consorted with Jesus through those forty days ever saw a "church" or ever heard or spoke of such a thing as a "church."

One other thing is to be noticed. The appearances came always without announcement and closed without adieu. He came, no one knew how or whence. He went, no one knew how or whither. He went no more to mount or garden, no more to the Temple or the Bethany retreat. He came and went as always at home everywhere. He was here and there, the Master and the Lover of both worlds.













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